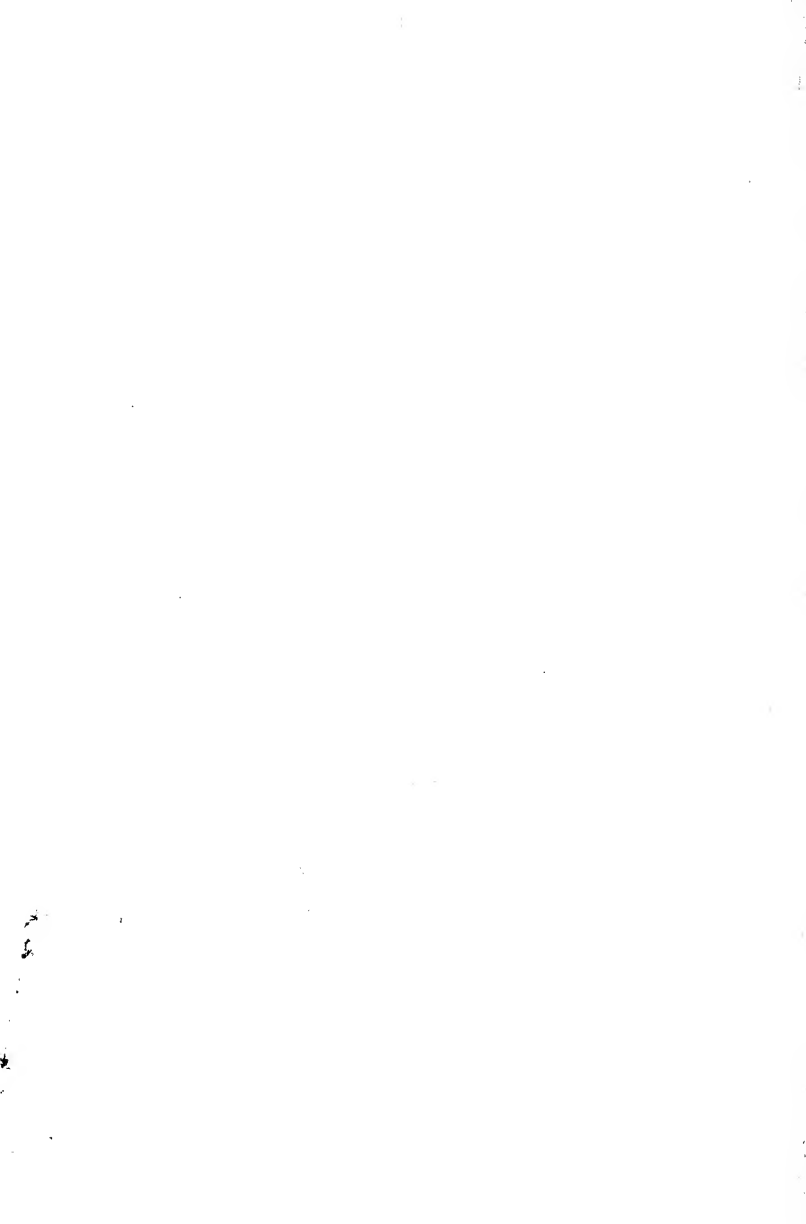


# LETTERS FROM OREGON BOYS IN FRANCE









# Letters From Oregon Boys in France

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FIRST EDITION  
1917-1918

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ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY  
GEORGE PHILLIPS

Press of  
Glass & Prudhomme Company  
Portland, Oregon

**Lovingly Dedicated  
to the  
Mothers, Wives and Sisters  
of  
Oregon's Brave Soldiers**

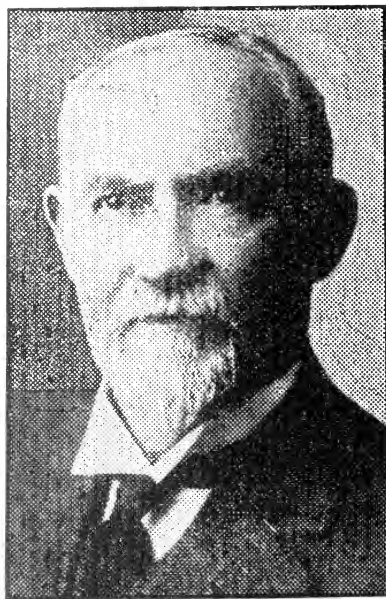


*Let there be no misunderstanding.*

*Our present and immediate task is to win the war and nothing shall turn us aside from it until it is accomplished. Every power and resource we possess, whether of men or money or of materials, is being devoted and will continue to be devoted to that purpose until it is achieved.*

**WOODROW WILSON.**

*December 4, 1917.*



**JAMES WITHYCOMBE**  
Governor of Oregon



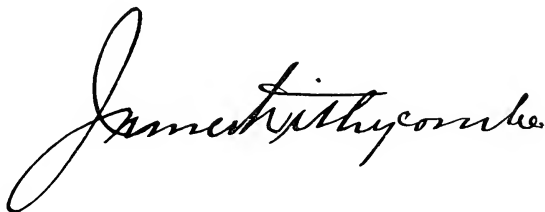
*State of Oregon, Executive Department, Salem*

*December 18, 1917.*

*My dear Madam:*

*Anything which tends to the honor and credit of our soldier boys is entitled to the full support of every loyal American, and I am therefore glad to give my endorsement to your booklet entitled, "Letters From Oregon Boys in France." This book will certainly prove of great value and interest in after years as it will be the means of preserving an organized record of the experiences of the Oregon boys who are upholding the honor of their country in a foreign land. I sincerely trust that your booklet will meet with a ready sale and that the Red Cross will profit through your patriotic effort.*

*Very truly yours,*

A large, elegant handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "James H. Hays". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the "Very truly yours," text.

*Governor.*

*In compiling these letters from Portland boys now in France, who were among the first to volunteer their services for their country, a double purpose has been in view.*

*First, to enlarge, through the sale of these booklets, the American Red Cross fund, of which our boys so often speak in terms of deepest gratitude, and secondly, to give a clearer vision to the "home folks" of the chivalrous work our American boys are doing in France. If it may prove a source of pleasure to them to know that through their letters they are also rendering financial aid to the Great Cause, this booklet has fulfilled its purpose.*

*To the friends and relatives who have made this booklet possible, I, personally, extend my thanks.*

*M. E. W.*

*Dec. 24, 1917.*



## Letters From Oregon Boys in France

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*Excerpts from a letter from Captain Kenneth D. Hauser,  
Co. F, 18th Railway Engineers, to his father, E. V.  
Hauser, Multnomah Hotel.*

France, November, 1917.

Today we received 28 sacks of mail for Co. F, marked Captain Kenneth D. Hauser. It filled the whole regimental postoffice and was the envy of the camp. I decided to issue it to the boys, as they needed it; so we got busy and doled it out to them. Our orderly room is in one of the huts, and the line filed in; we had it all systematized. First, I had them checked over and totaled on paper; then we divided it into the number of men and officers, share and share alike. They made a sample test of what each man's share was. One man took charge of each article and we would call a man's name and the article. The man would hold a box and the things were thrown into it from all corners of the room. The line lasted three hours and it was better than a vaudeville show. It was so rich I went up to headquarters and invited all the officers down to see it, and they all came.

Afterward I got one of the boys from Port Angeles, Larry Mason, with his tenor and guitar, and John Shaver, with his ukelele, and our wonderful quartette, Jimmy Clock, Killaly Green of Aberdeen, Cecil McNutt of Port Angeles, and Dustin of Coos Bay, and we all sang the old songs and cheered the auxiliary.

I declared NO TAPS, and it is after 12 midnight now and we have just quit. The officers all stayed to the finish and said my boys were wonderful—so close together and just like one big family and so talented and jolly.

Tell the auxiliary what a wonderful feeling of gratitude there is toward them. The football suits from Portland all arrived.

NOTE—Following are a *few* of the articles contained in the 28 mail sacks mentioned above:

300 lbs. Assorted Tobacco  
300 lbs. Assorted Candy  
24 Football Suits  
20 Boxes Chewing Gum  
20 Boxes Chocolate

360 Corncob Pipes  
500 Candles  
400 Bars Soap  
100 Sweaters  
45 Doz. Pair All Wool Socks



*Letters from Captain A. E. McKennett, 18th Regiment, Engineer Railway, to his mother, Mrs. R. L. McKennett, 185 Fifteenth street, Portland, Ore., and his son, Robert.*

Somewhere in France, November 5, 1917.

My Dear Mother:

Your letter in answer to my first in France received. It had been some little time since we had received a big mail and we were very glad to get them. I received the first Oregonian that I had seen since I left the States. I am still in good health and spirits and hope to continue the same. The weather is about the same as at home, so we experienced no difference that way. I received a very nice letter from Mr. Lyons recently signed by nearly all the officers and office help. We are getting quite used to France and French customs. They don't seem as odd as they did at first, but the other day when I saw an old lady walking along the road, wearing wooden shoes, carrying a large basketful of vegetables on her head and knitting away on some garment, I had to stop and admire her dexterity. I am getting along fine in French and talk considerably. Tell Catherine I could read a French letter if she wrote me one now. Tell Minnie hello for me and tell Mrs. Way I would like some of her beans to eat with our war bread, and oh how I wish I could have a good drink of Bull Run water!

We keep busy. The war is not going as well as I should like to see it and it may take us longer to finish it than we figured on. We have a good-size man's job cut out for us and I hope to be in it to the finish and I will be ready to come home when victory is ours, but not before. Lieutenant Saul left the regiment tonight. He has been transferred to another location on special work and has a very

desirable post. We are very sorry to see him go. I have now been on French soil for over two months and feel quite at home. I can talk pretty well. Things are running along quite smoothly and we are getting down to serious work.

Regards to Arthur and Catherine, Mr. and Mrs. Roberts, the Galligans, Minnie and her mother. Much love to you and son. Lovingly,  
EARL.

My Dear Boy:

Your letters have been received with a great deal of pleasure and the reports I have received have been a gratification to me. I am finding out what a man you are, by my being away; however, I did not doubt at all but what you would stand the test. Today is one of the first nice days I have seen for some time. It does not know how to rain in Portland.

I am today in the city of ———, and as I sit here in the office with my window open I can hear at least a dozen big church bells ringing. It is 2:30 P. M. (6:30 A. M. with you), and I presume some service is being held.

These French cities have the grandest cathedrals one can imagine. Some of them are centuries old; one I have visited was begun some time in the 10th century. I would like to send you some pictures, but it is not permitted. When the weather is nice here it is delightful. There are some chateaus and many of great historic interest. I presume you see a great deal of warlike sights now at home, but one can only see the bright side there. We are not far from a certain hospital—an old grand chateau and grounds for soldiers who have lost limbs. It is always full and one cannot walk far on the street without seeing the terrible results of this dreadful conflict. Poor France has suffered and the best of her men have gone. I tell

you, son, I cannot tell the evidence of havoc that this war has produced. I have seen four girls, children under 12, with their hands cut off at the wrists by Germans, so it is claimed, because they were found working in munition factories in places captured in Northern France in their early drives. The Huns, or, as they are called "Bosches," certainly have a lot to answer for, if half of the stories are true.

Well, how are you getting along in Spanish? I have been drilling in French and practice it on every victim I can find and am making good progress. I have forgotten a lot of my Spanish, or, rather, I have crowded it out of my mind with French. My French commandant and his wife, of whom I told you about and who spoke Spanish, have refused to talk Spanish to me any more, and I have to get along in French. It is good for me. I find the way to learn the language is to talk it.

Well, son, I am glad you are getting along so well in school and having a good time also. It is getting near Christmas and it will be quite a task for Uncle Sam to handle all the boxes coming to France.

Do you still attend the Junior Guards? You will soon be an officer if you keep it up. I hope the U. S. troops come fast, for by the looks of things in Russia and Italy we will need all we can get and as quickly.

Now, son, write me whenever you can, and if there is anything you want to know, ask me and I will tell you if the censor will allow it. Regards to all my friends and lots of love to you and grandma. DAD.

*In a letter written by Lieutenant Ben L. Norden, United States Navy, former Coroner of Multnomah County, lifts the censorship he has directed on the battleship on which he is serving his country, and tells in a manner highly enlightening of the visits to various South American ports his boat has made. Incidentally, Lieutenant Norden in this message, sent to Assistant Surgeon Eurides K. Scott, United States Navy, pays to the boys from American homes now wearing the navy blue a tribute which members of those homes will read with welling pride and gratification. The more interesting passages of the letter follow:*

Today we were detached from the squadron and ordered to an Atlantic port, undoubtedly to begin a work more serious than a diplomatic errand. We were under way this evening and the executive officer has just announced in the wardroom that our destination is a certain port in the good old U. S. A. Can you imagine the joy and enthusiasm now running riot throughout the ship? It is nearly seven months since we left the States.

I have acted as censor on this ship at different times and have religiously observed the censorship, but now that we are to join and be absorbed by the Atlantic fleet I feel no compunction in writing of our cruise.

We visited Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo and Buenos Aires, going to each several times, except Buenos Aires, where we made but one call, remaining but a week. To say that we were well received is to put it too mildly. Our hosts entertained us lavishly and enthusiastically. Our treatment of Cuba helped much to gain the confidence of South Americans, and, later, when we persistently refused to go into Mexico, the "bogy" of our intended future dominion over the Western Hemisphere disappeared like chaff before the wind. I feel certain that after the war the immense volume of trade between South America and Europe, which has existed ever since the



Portuguese, Spanish and Dutch colonization of the southern continent, will in large measure be diverted to the United States.

We of North America little realize how well advanced the southern republics are in all things—government, education, commerce, in fact everything but railroad building. They excel us in the splendor of their architecture, park development and city beautifying, but are not very far along in the manufactures. Their educational systems are, in some instances, superior to ours. I must confess that nowhere in the medical centers of the United States have I seen an institution in any way superior to the University of the Medical Sciences at Montevideo, and their medical men are well equipped, able and intensely up to date.

In point of population, Buenos Aires is the leading city we visited. It is wonderfully beautiful and very progressive. Rio de Janeiro is the next largest, and although the Portuguese type of architecture is vastly different from our conceptions, still I count Rio a magnificent city. Montevideo, in some way or other, made us feel more as though we were in a North American city, and we liked it immensely. Bahia is the smallest of the four, and, in development at least, brings to one's mind Quebec or New Orleans because of the fact that the old city and the new city are distinct in location, architecture and customs.

Everywhere we visited, in Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina, the good citizens vied with each other in doing all they could to welcome us. Receptions, banquets, balls, operas, theaters, races, boxing matches, motor parties, teas and dinner parties without end! We officers were detailed to attend the different functions, and to say that we were continually "on the go" is not the slightest exaggeration. In fact, many times we have put to sea for the continuance of the patrol with glad hearts because we felt that even the monotonous grind of patrolling, with all its inconveniences, would give us some rest.

And right here I want to say a word about the enlisted men. Those American boys who have come from the farms, the shops, the colleges and the homes of our people, to don the blue jackets in the service of Uncle Sam! I feel they have done a lion's share of the work in helping to command the respect of these people for our nation. Their conduct ashore has been exemplary, particularly in the abstinence from or temperate use of liquor and their uniformly courteous and chivalrous conduct toward women. Everywhere we had most gratifying reports of their deportment, and when 1000 or 2000 men went ashore on liberty the augmented police reserves, anticipating the usual results of Jack at play, found they had nothing to do but bow and smile to the friendly salutations of a multitude of manly boys.

And they fraternized with the people in a charming way. Here is one instance: I was walking down the Avenida Central in Rio one afternoon in "cits" when I came upon a bluejacket sitting at a table out on the sidewalk in front of a cafe. He had four or five little children at the table as his guests and they were all ferociously attacking generous portions of ice cream and each had a package of candy. Quite a number of people were standing around them and seemed much pleased and amused at the little gathering. He was a boy from my own ship and when he recognized me and saluted I asked, "Having a party, lad?" He smiled and replied, "Yes, sir, helping to cement relations, sir." That was the spirit that seemed to imbue them all and the South Americans have come to know our seamen as clean, manly fellows. We have had a very happy ship and, except for the separation from our families and friends, are quite content. The long time between mails, a month or six weeks, is not pleasant, but can't be helped.

Give the boys in the Rotary Club my heartiest good wishes and tell Sig Sichel he doesn't need to fear any real competition from the smoke shops of South America.

Their tobacco would choke a goat! Tell Charley Bradley the styles in cravats and socks down here make the rainbow look like a bunch of crepe. Well, it's bedtime, so guess I'll call it a day and wrap the drapery of my couch about me. Remember me as your sincere friend.

BEN L. NORDEN.



*Mrs. W. L. Wood received the following letter from her son, Lieutenant Lambert A. Wood, Machine Gun Company, 9th United States Infantry:*

France, November 4, 1917.

Dearest Mother:

Still no mail, but I have hopes that some will come soon. I have just read a splendid article by George Pattullo in the Saturday Evening Post, called "Come Through With the Punch." That man is over here and knows the job we have. There is one saying in there that should be copied in every home in the country. It is this: "This war is not going to be won by Y. M. C. A. workers, or relief societies, or Red Cross workers, but by big, two-fisted fighting men, six feet tall and wearing size 10 shoes, who can fight and work for 18 hours, eat a huge meal, go to bed and get up and do it all over again."

That is the truest thing that I have heard yet, and the longer you are over in the thick of things here the more you will know it is true.

One picks up a paper and reads: Podunk Relief Society shows great patriotism by giving a chicken dinner, etc. It is all right, of course, but they are side issues and tend to give the men over here the idea that people at home don't realize the job ahead. You people see what I mean; it is letting the tail wag the dog. Ambulance corps are all right, too; but don't you see we have to get an army before we can go to side issues. Why, even a wagon load of beer going forward has the right of way over a string of ambulances going back. Two of my classmates here are Y. M. C. A. workers, but can't you see that any man in the uniform of the line of the army is more of a comrade than they are.

The relief of soldiers is secondary to getting them fit for fighting. They have comfortable quarters and fixed hours and are safe, yet their letters are probably full of their privations. The trouble is people don't get to the bottom of things. In my estimation a man of good physique who goes into any other hard work than the line of the army, unless he is especially fitted for the job, is a slacker.

Our country can have more ambulances, more relief societies and more Red Cross workers than all the other nations in the world, yet we will have come no nearer beating the Hun. It is the men with rifles on their shoulders and packs on their backs who alone can beat the Bosche. For women who are working on these things there can be only the highest praise, but for sound, healthy men only censure. Don't be misled by the hair-raising experiences and frightful hardships that the ambulance drivers tell or write about. Just tell them quietly that my "Dough boy" (infantryman) who has been in an attack has had experiences that would put theirs to shame, and as to the hardships of driving a warm car on a cold night, just remind them that when that was going on there were men standing thigh deep in icy water, others crawling on their bellies through the mud and slime and filth of No Man's Land. Just remember that it is the man with the bayonet who can win this war. All the other activities help, of course, inasmuch as they help the man with the bayonet; but let our people get to the bottom of things, put your weight behind the man with his bayonet and bomb; he is going to win this war and is going to go through hell to do it.

The only good Bosche is a dead Bosche, and it is the fighting men alone who kill! We are fighting a nation that has no mercy and, by heaven, let's kill.

I am sorry, mother, dear, that I have bored you with this tirade, but I have seen things that make me feel that I should do all in my power to let you people know what

I consider the fundamentals. Our country's motto should be: "The nation is the servant of their fighting men."

Well, mother, dear, I am very well and happy and working hard. It is no child's play. But my work would be pleasant which had as its object to beat and kill the Bosche. The weather is still cold but it is not as cold as it was.

Well, dearest folks, I must stop now. Love to all you dear ones. Your loving son, LAMBERT.



*Mrs. David Loring, 812 Marshall street, received the following interesting letter from her son, David Loring, Jr., Second Lieutenant Headquarters Company, 23d Infantry:*

I brought my last letter to a close the day before we sighted land, since it was announced we were to hand them in for censorship. After arriving here it was returned to me to seal up. I had only time to add the remark that we had landed, and send it off; therefore, I shall start this where the other left off.

I was sitting reading in the smoking room early in the evening, when I noticed a decided list to the starboard side, and, wondering what it was, went out on deck. It was due to the congregation of everyone on that side of the ship, all watching a blinking light shining through the fog. It was the first lighthouse on the French coast. The fog was heavy, but soon another light appeared, and in an hour we were steaming past a long line of shore lights. We dropped anchor about 10 P. M. and waited till daylight to enter the harbor.

By daylight we were under way again, and, as the fog lifted, the coast line came into view, low rolling dunes dotted here and there by neat white houses, scarcely visible in the distance. Soon we were surrounded by an astonishing number of small fishing boats, gay and picturesque with red, brown and blue sails. Personally, I doubt if there was a fish apiece for them. "Vive l' Amerique!" they shouted, and we returned the compliment with interest. The boat was all confusion with packing and dressing to go ashore, but the tide was low and at 11 o'clock we anchored again to await its rise. At 3 P. M. we were off again, and as we neared land the rail was crowded, everyone getting their first impression of France. A prettier shore I've never seen. Rocky bluffs covered with bright vegetation, sandy beaches swarming with children, impossibly neat cottages in toy gardens, every inch

cared for to within an inch of its life. As we drew near groups could be seen on the bluffs waving French and American flags, and the men shouted with delight at every new detail, queer two-wheeled carts, striped bathing tents, etc. A Ford bouncing along a road brought forth a perfect roar.

The village was an inspiration. Picturesque houses, small winding streets, and an esplanade along the bay. As we approached our band struck up the "Marsallaise" and was answered by another from the quay. We sailed through a narrow canal with streets on each side, the houses as close as though we were in a streetcar. An elevated would be nearer the point, for our decks were well above the street.

I wish I could adequately describe that scene. It was as unreal as a stage setting. A back drop of wonderful old houses was decorated with allied flags and the windows and picturesque balconies were filled with prosperous families who waved and tossed us flowers. Below the doors of typical comic opera cafes and shops were overflowing, while the front of the stage swarmed with a perfect stage mob, soldiers in various colored uniforms, old men, girls and thousands of children, who, in striped sweaters and with knees bare, hung over the iron railing. I couldn't have believed France could be so French. And the welcome they gave us! I'm not easily moved, but I shall remember it for years. A perfect roar all along the way, and a continuous bombardment of flowers and fruit, the latter doing rather more harm than good. We returned the fire with coins and packages of cigarettes, both of which threatened to turn the scene into a riot. No American crowd could have been so spontaneously joyful and enthusiastic. A great crowd of young fellows tried to give an American cheer. "Edp, eep, orray!" they shouted, and our men howled. A great many were shouting what sounded like "taydee" till we discovered they were saying "Teddy." All this rot about calling us



Sammies and Jonathans and Yanks appears to have been settled by the French, who have christened us "Teddies," which is much more acceptable to the men. What a scream it will be if, after refusing to let Roosevelt come over, his name should be attached to the troops.

It was dark by the time we reached our dock, and the last sight we had of the public square showed it filled with a crowd of German prisoners who, under guard, solemnly watched us steam by. They are everywhere here, working on the roads and in the fields, but we are not allowed to talk to them. After we had tied up and darkness had fallen the other boats came in, bands playing, and tied up against us. I climbed across the rail onto the next one and ran square into Lambert Wood. We climbed from boat to boat all evening, and met innumerable fellows we knew, a great many whom I didn't even know were on the expedition. Lights, of course, were allowed, and we stayed up late exchanging visits.

The next morning was spent in debarking, and by noon the streets were full of our men. Shortly after mess the march began out to the camp. The streets were lined with curious citizens, who considerably upset the decorum of the march by tossing the men fruit and flowers. By night we were comfortably settled in barracks, and as far as outward appearances go might as well be in Syracuse. Within the camp there's little to remind one of France.

Yesterday afternoon we had off and spent the day seeing the town. France is all I had expected and more. The quaint streets, white villas and thatched cottages are a continual source of surprise. My architectural instincts have burst out anew and I feel I could fill Portland with a hundred entirely new and different houses. They are all too good to be true. The cafes more than uphold the reputation of France. They are everywhere and no one appears to have anything to do but patronize them. Every farmhouse is labeled "Buvette" and aspires to be a wayside inn.

A strange polyglot language has grown up. We address the natives in broken French and they reply in broken English. Prices of things are given a combination of systems. A thing may cost \$2 3 francs, or 6 francs and 5 cents. American money is accepted and change given in francs. Sometimes the opposite is the case. I gave a 5-franc bill and received 25 cents American money in change. All this causes a terrible amount of mental arithmetic.

The effects of war are not apparent on the surface. Everyone smiles and appears in the best of spirits. It is only when you talk to them that there appears another side. You can't help but admire them all, the spirit they are showing and the bravery. There is never a word of complaint or criticism. I only wish our country could learn to pull together like this.

I don't know how long we shall be here, but believe this stop is only temporary, as to what I can tell you. I can give no names of places or anything concerning movements of troops, numbers or names of organizations. There may be times when I can't write, or when my mail will be delayed, but never worry when you do not hear, for, should anything happen, you would be notified through the War Department long before I could send word. However, depend upon it, I shall write as often as possible. I'm terribly sorry I couldn't send a cable, for it left you a long time with no news from me; but the order was issued just before we arrived that there would be no cabling.

Now, to begin where I left off. We remained just long enough at our last "depot" camp to get fully equipped. The work was stiff but interesting, cramped a little for want of adequate drill grounds, it being in no sense a training camp, merely a station on the way. However, we got some good work in, and I was able to get a little closer in touch with my platoon. Many who appeared to be without promise are showing up surprisingly. An un-

pretentious little Italian turned out to have had three years' service in the Italian army during the war of 1911 against the Turks and to have been an instructor in hand grenades. Others have come up also.

After a little good preliminary work, orders were received to move, though no one knew where to. Officers were sent ahead to arrange for the billeting of the troops and speculation was rife as to our destination. We were to leave a battalion at a time, and ours, being the first, was to take a 6 A. M. train. This meant getting up a little after 2. They use the daylight saving scheme here, so that 2 o'clock is really 1, and there's eight hours' difference between us. So at 6 P. M., just as you were thinking about dinner, I was sleepily pulling on my trousers and stumbling out into a very cold morning. It was, of course, pitch dark, but by 4 o'clock breakfast of a sort had been served, truckloads of baggage had been delivered at the station and the company was formed with full packs answering the rollcall.

As we marched out of the company street and joined the column, bugles were just calling reveille and all over camp the buglers were answering each other. The other regiments stumbled out and waved us a sleepy good-bye, as we swung out on the road to town. It really was a wonderful night. As we topped a rise, I glanced back to see that all was well, and caught a glimpse of the column, all dark but for rows of guns cutting across the sky. A red and almost full moon was just sinking behind the camp and the first streaks of dawn were lighting the white stucco of the village. An hour brought us into town. Shopkeepers were just taking down their shutters, lights were still burning, but half-dressed figures waved to us from every window. One noticeable thing about the regular army, they never make any noise. At Plattsburg we sang our lungs out, but these men march on silent and almost expressionless. It is much more impressive, and

in contrast to the chatter of the French, gives an appearance of businesslike determination.

We lined up in the station square, were inspected, joined by our working details, and a little before 6 crossed the freight yards to the train. The toy engines amused the men; Fords they called them. They are painted and gilded and about as businesslike as, for instance, a Louis XIV chair. The men didn't pay much attention to the rather poor looking freight cars, open somewhat like a cattle car, but I noticed they all bore a sign, "Hommes 36-40, Chevaux 8," and, sure enough, from 36 to 40 men went in every car, and the remarkable part was they weren't so bad, after all. The officers had second-class coaches, except the colonel, who, of course, had a first-class. We were very comfortable and spread ourselves at ease. I can't tell how long the trip was, or it might give away where we are, but it was five or six times as long as we could expect from the distance. We jogged comfortably along, stopping to let everything by, and in an hour or so for every meal, where cans of steaming coffee were served. We passed a number of interesting chateaux I should enjoy describing. One I had intended visiting that Sunday had we not moved so soon.

Another thing I had never seen nor imagined before were the cliff dwellings through the vineyard district. Homes all the way from caves and wine cellars up to great inns, all built in the cliff with nothing showing but their facades, chimneys sticking out of the vineyards way above. I could have spent hours wandering among them. Altogether, I'm crazy about the country. It is so much prettier than I could have expected.

One afternoon we passed a great aviation field spread out over a vast flat area, rows and rows of hangars and the air literally full of machines. Another time we saw a large prison camp and passed an almost endless row of prisoners. They waved at us quite cheerfully, and grinned all over. The Germans, they say, are quite content in

these camps. They are certainly safe. We often stopped beside trains of Poilus returning "en permission" who jabbered at us incessantly.

The last day of the trip we spent a couple of hours in a town occupied by an American hospital unit, and the train was surrounded by nurses. It certainly was a welcome sight. They grabbed all the officers and took us uptown to a cafe, where we had a great meal. They also told us the first real news we've had of the American forces here, some of which was quite surprising. We were told we would reach our destination the next morning. We did, but only by the narrowest margin could it be called morning. It was only a little after 12 that we were awakened and told to get our men out. A heavy fog hung over everything and we could make out nothing. The companies were lined up, the train unloaded and then we were marched a short distance to some temporary barracks, and we were up again and lining up. I had the baggage detail again and set out for the train. The fog slowly began to lift and I saw the greatest sight yet. Nothing close to could be distinguished, but above the fog and floating like a fairy palace appeared the roofs of a town. It was built on a great hill, and the crowded red-roofed houses, piled one above the other along steep winding streets and terraces, the whole surmounted by an old Norman tower, looked like nothing so much as one of Maxfield Parrish's paintings.

Slowly the fog cleared at the base and disclosed a long straggling street running almost to our feet. It was the sort of city I used to dream about. By the time the baggage was loaded on trucks the second train had arrived and the company ready to march off and leave the field to them. The mists were now drifting out of the hollows, and a sight the opposite to the first appeared. The road dipped into a valley, crossed an old stone bridge, and just beyond was another and smaller village, nothing showing but the ever present red tile roofs and one stone church

spire. We marched over the bridge and under a great "Welcome" banner, which incongruously reminded one of Elks' conventions and old home weeks.

The town was nothing but a street, a square, and a dozen courtyards, but I think it's been here since the flood. There is an old stone cross in the square, intricately carved with letters almost worn away. The houses and courts run one into another in a hopeless jumble, and the walls all slope at a different angle. If I don't find material for sketching I shall consider myself beyond hope.

We officers are billeted with families, but for the sake of crisis, I'll describe the men's billets first. Some English book of the war describes a billet as a group of barns with a rectangular smell in the middle. I'll grant that the source of the smell is in the middle, it being a colossal manure pile, placed usually in front of the door, but the smell itself is everywhere. However, the quarters have been scrupulously cleaned and they are as comfortable as any we've had yet.

As for me, I'm in the height of luxury. No room I've ever possessed has quite compared with this. Even the Lampoon pales beside it. It is in the house of an old lady who must be at least 200, but who bobs about and jabbers totally incomprehensible words in the pleasantest possible manner. My room is large and high ceilinged with a sort of anteroom, the floor of which is stone. The main room has a wooden floor, beamed ceiling, a large hooded fireplace, which has long ceased to work but which is replaced by a stove. A great cupboard occupies the whole of one wall. It would bring a fortune in America. There is a weather-beaten grandfather's clock that was just what I searched Boston for, for the D. U., but the bed is the most colossal thing. It is set in a recess in the wall and hung with one of those great brocaded canopies and the feather mattress is at least ten feet high. Altogether, it's the sort of room in which a general might die surrounded

by several regiments of cavalry. Lighting arrangements are, of course, noticeable by their absence, but otherwise it's beyond all expectations. I forgot to mention a French window opening at the back on a little enclosed garden which is at present full of various, and to me nameless, flowers.

Our two captains are billeted together nearby in rooms of equal grandeur, with also a large dining room, where the company officers all eat. They have arranged to have it cooked by the people, and so far it is excellent.

As yet nothing of importance has occurred here. We have been getting the men settled and inspected, and this morning drill was interrupted by a violent shower, which so far has not let up. Last evening I climbed to the top of the little hill city nearby. It is a town of about 1000 inhabitants and consists chiefly of one endless street, which runs straight up the hill, and upon approaching the top starts spiralling and breaks into innumerable alleys and terraced courts, leading at last to the Norman church on top. Gardens and orchards mingle with the streets, and tumble-down stone walls and covered gateways, separate terraced vineyards, while long flights of steps lead from place to place. Here and there a lookout place is built where you can sit on an old wall and get a view of the miles of rolling country below, or a cafe furnishes a terrace on the edge of a bluff.

The country around is like a great golf links. Miles of undulating meadow cut by clear white streaks of roads, each with its double row of poplars, while every crossroad is village, each identical with the one we occupy.

*Oregon boy of Co. C, 18th Railway Engineers, writes to his mother, Mrs. M. Prasil, 180 Lane street, of his chat with British royalty.*

Yesterday I put in all day going over London. It is sure some village, old-fashioned and solid. Everything is very dull here; every woman you meet is in mourning. The people sure treat us fine.

I sure have it over the most. Landed in England Friday and had a personal chat with the king and queen Saturday. Keep your eye on Pathe's Weekly in the movies and you will see me talking to them. Enclosed I send you a clipping out of the Sunday Illustrated Herald, showing me (your tramp) talking to the queen. That is going some, don't you think so?

You see, we were challenged by the Royal Engineers to a tug-of-war at Aldershot at the military tournament, reviewed by the royal family. I got a game leg from the pull.

After the games the queen gave us each a silver medal. As soon as I think it safe I will send you mine, so I won't lose it. I wouldn't take a farm for it.

There are quite a few wounded American soldiers in England already. We don't know how many; in fact, we can't find out. There are lots of things we can't write, but after I get home you will know it all.

It seems funny that we are stationed now in barracks dedicated by Kaiser Bill in 1910.





*Morris Dargan, with the 18th Engineers, Railway, American Expeditionary Forces, declares Red Cross is doing wonderful work for the American boys on foreign soil. Excerpts from his interesting letter to his sister follows:*

You have asked me whether or not we saw any submarines. No, we didn't see any, but all through the submarine zone we wore life preservers at all times. We wore them at meals, on the deck, in the hold and in bed.

We had lifeboat drill a couple of times each day and were not allowed to throw anything overboard, lest a "sub" would sight it and follow our trail. We were not permitted to talk loudly or to smoke on deck after night, etc. With all these precautions it was natural that we expected almost anything. We didn't learn, however, until we landed that we had been chased by "subs" on two different nights—while we slept—and that only the wisdom of the captain of the ship saved us. That came as quite a shock, I assure you.

I wouldn't like to live that part of my experiences over again. Though I did not worry at the time, I can realize now that it was more perilous than anything which we have done since. It was a big chance and we were lucky enough to win. We have since heard that the ship on which we came over was sunk on her return voyage to New York. We are not sure whether this is a rumor or not. Do you remember the Carpathia, which saved the people on the Titanic? It was her captain who brought us over. He surely proved his knowledge of the Atlantic Ocean. I guess he needed this knowledge.

Well, it's all over now and as yet we have not had to face anything as trying as the trip, so you can see that the danger is not great. Nor will the danger be great until next spring. Then will mark the most momentous hours of the whole war. I am writing by the light of a candle. It isn't good for the eyes, neither are they good for the pocketbook. This one cost me 90 centimes, almost

a franc, and it will be practically gone before taps. You can buy little ones at the Y. M. C. A. for 40 centimes, but they don't last long enough for practical purposes.

They see the soldier coming, and when they do it seems to be a signal to raise the price. It's the soldier's own fault. He flashes too much money. They know he has it and they know he'll spend it, so they get right on and "ride."

You speak of sending me \$10 a month to give to some poor family that needs it. That's a mighty charitable thought, mother, but if I were you I wouldn't do it, for several reasons. Now, God knows, I see enough poverty, suffering, sickness and destitution over here, but I am not in a position to give anyone money, feeling it will do them good.

I am in a position to make many mistakes as to the right ones to give it to. Now if you give that money to the Red Cross in the States they will get it to the people who are really in need of it and they will make it buy things those people actually need. Also, you may rest assured that it will get here when given to that organization. And, as far as that goes, you can render a thousand good deeds to these people by helping the Red Cross in every way possible. When they need money you can contribute what you like, but, most of all, lend them your actual assistance as much as possible.

Another thing, be careful of waste, especially flour, and encourage others to be careful. Use corn meal and other grains besides wheat as much as you can, because every pound saved is another pound that will be exported to France, and the Frenchman must have wheat bread. Bread constituted 50 per cent of the diet of the French people before the war and they can't be taught to eat anything in the way of a substitute for it.

The English can eat corn meal, bran and bean meal, but the little Poilui can't fight without wheat bread. Help him to get it and you are performing a real service.

*Mr. and Mrs. James A. Clock, 3418 Fifty-fifth street Southeast, received the following letter from their son, Bugler J. W. Clock, Co. F, 18th Engineers Railway:*

November 7, 1917.

Dear Father and Mother:

Have just taken inventory of the many useful things you have sent me and you can't imagine how happy and grateful I am. As I have said before, American tobacco is at a premium. We cannot buy it in France. Have been out of handkerchiefs for some time. Both of you are specialists at mental telepathy, or you have wonderful foresight, as I had run out of everything the box contained. I think that it was my birthday present, as it came just as the right time, and I want to thank you and Dad for all of it. The weather here continues warm and rainy. A few of the fellows have colds and fever. I was bothered a little last week, but am all right now, thanks to the little medicine chest. Have had occasion to turn to it many times and it has always proved a success. It is well worth its trouble and transportation here. Tomorrow night our quartette is going to sing at the opening of a Y. M. C. A. branch near by. We are getting a pretty good start and expect to make quite a few appearances here. For a bunch of soldiers we do pretty good. The only thing we lack is new music. By the way, last week they took Thorny to the base hospital. He had a bad case of the grippe. One of the boys returned today from there and said he was getting along all right; expects to be out in a week. The Co. F football team has won the championship of the regiment, winning four games and tying one. Captain Houser is very proud of the boys.

Of course, there is no company like Co. F. Oh, yes, I want to ask if mother knitted those socks? They are very heavy and warm and are worth 20 pairs of cotton sox; wouldn't trade them for a farm. Well, will have to close. Take good care of yourselves and don't worry. Will be home next summer. With love.

WHITCOMB.



*In a letter to his mother, Mrs. Margaret Conroy, 671 Gantenbein avenue, Sergeant Conroy says:*

I am enclosing a letter from a beautiful French girl that I met in my travels over here. I am sure you will be amused at it. She is trying very hard to be perfect in English and makes some funny mistakes. So you see all is not hard work and war over here.

The "pretty little French girl" finds it difficult to master some of the American slang. "I have not in the least found what 'kidding' means," she confesses. Her letter was as follows:

"Saumur, September 29, 1917.—Dear Sir, My New Friend: You are an amiable correspondent. I am glad of your charming letter. I hope the sun will soon be more gentle with you than now. Here the days are warm yet. I like to read that you love our dear France, because I believe it is the finest country of the world. If I knew America, I should perhaps find it still more beautiful. It is not?

"What town were you living to Stades United? Speak me a little of your home, of your life yonder, will you? Have you not too much the black spleen? Between our two countrys the sea is so much large!

"I felicitate you to have quickly learned French! I am also working English, and I find Shakespeare's language as difficult as beautiful! Tell me if you understand very well my letters. I am perhaps not writing very correctly? But I like you language and I try to know it quite well! However, I have not in the least found what 'kidding' means, and I shall be glad that you may explain this word!

"Good luck, my friend. I send you the sweetest thought of one little 'Flower of France.'"

Sergeant Conroy says he has taken a \$200 Liberty bond, which will be sent to his mother when paid for. "Every American soldier in France has one or more," he

says. "I made an allotment of \$20 per month to the Federal Reserve Bank of New York for nine months and \$27 the 10th month. It is to be delivered to you when it is paid for.

"The major and General Pershing asked that each soldier subscribe and I think that there has been a 100 per cent subscription. Write to me often, as a letter is a god-send. The weather here (October 20) is cold, but the sun shines most of the time; that is, when it is not raining.

"I certainly hope you are not worrying about me, as I am all o. k. and working hard. I have changed stations again. Have been all over France now. I think this is my last change though, as this will be a permanent station for the pay office.

"Everything here is expensive. Soap is 4 franc 50, or about 75 cents a pound, and everything else in proportion."



*Some intimate word sketches of life at the front are contained in a letter received recently by Mrs. C. B. Simmons, of 495 Heights Terrace, from her son, Rouse Simmons.*

Nothing much has happened this week except the regular routine work. We went on four night trips up to within four kilometers (two and a half miles) of the trenches, and saw quite a bit of action, but even that is growing monotonous now.

Of course, we are under shell fire for about three hours on every one of these trips, but there is really little danger.

I was sure scared the first time we ran into German shrapnel, but we are all so used to it now that we don't even notice a bursting shell as long as it doesn't hit too close.

We start out in convoy order about 3 P. M. and get in at 3 or 4 A. M. the next day. First we go to the loading depot, just outside of the fire zone, where our cars are loaded with shells, grenades, or whatever the orders say, and then we wait till dark before going on. We run along about 50 meters apart, with all lights out and engines shut down, until we reach the trench supply depot, at about 11 o'clock, where we are unloaded. There our work is over, and we get home and to bed as fast as we can go.

All this would be simple if it were not for a few difficulties. In the first place, the cannon are unwieldy and hard to handle, and the roads are terrible, even for a touring car. Consequently, we simply get the "gizzards" shaken out of us on every trip. Also, it is very easy to lose the way when running in the dark, and sometimes a car will take the wrong road and be lost till daylight. On top of all this, the cars are in poor condition and are continually getting out of whack and delaying the convoy until they can be repaired. My driving-partner and I have spent more time working on our car up till now than we have in driving it.

Everything is, of course, in utter darkness until the "barrage" starts. Then a star-shell will suddenly shoot up in the air and flood everything with a sort of flickering white light for five or 10 seconds. This, then, is followed at rapidly decreasing intervals by others, until the stream of light is almost continuous. These star-shells are exactly like the fireworks kind, and would be beautiful if one could keep from thinking about their purpose, which is to get the range for the batteries, soon to begin their work.

Yesterday we took a load of barbed wire (trench style, with about two barbs to the inch) up to a supply depot about five kilometers in the rear of the trenches. We took the trip in daylight, as the hill country through which we passed prevented any accurate Bouche shell-fire. We passed two towns on the way that were literally nothing but ruins. They were held for two years by the Germans, who retreated last March. On our way back from the depot we saw a whole drove of German prisoners being marched back to the detention camp, and they were a sorry-looking lot. Most of them were just boys about 16 and 17 years of age, and quite a few were wounded.

It is certainly great to hear that the United States is getting ready for the war.

We are all anxious for magazines and papers of any kind, and tobacco. Send as many and as often as you can.

Later—Last night I witnessed the best thing I've seen since arriving here—a night air raid by German planes repulsed by French anti-aircraft guns and war planes. About 11 P. M. somebody in camp saw it begin and woke the rest of us to watch it. When we got up the whole sky to the north of us was lit up by at least 20 giant search-lights and hundreds of star shells. It reminded us strongly of a fireworks exhibition and the San Francisco Fair combined into one. The lights were all concentrated on one point at times, where we could see aeroplanes wildly



looping and circling round and round. The anti-aircraft guns were pounding away like mad and shrapnel shells would burst all around the machines with loud explosions.

Gradually the machines got nearer and nearer camp and we thought at first we were in for an attack. The Frenchmen, as usual, got wildly excited and ran around jabbering all sorts of things. However, the German planes were soon beaten off and we went back to bed.

Things like this are happening around here all the time but this is the first time I've had a chance to see a real fight. It's about time (3:30 P. M.) for the convoy to leave, so I'll have to cut this short and write a longer letter next time.

War aeroplanes are continually flying overhead and from a hill nearby, we can see the star bombs at night and the captive observation balloons in daytime.

Of course, we can hear the guns booming day and night.

The most important change of all is that I have changed services, as I have given up the ambulance work and am now training to drive a "camien," or munition truck.

We came from Bordeaux to Paris Tuesday night (had to sit up all night in over-crowded third-class carriages) and when we got to the main ambulance headquarters at Rue Rayneuard we found things altogether different from what we expected. Everything was great as far as living conditions were concerned, but the place was simply jammed with drivers waiting for a chance to get a car to run and many explained that they had already been waiting a month and that there were so many ahead of us that we would have to wait two months or more for a car. We then learned that the American Ambulance Corps had taken over a different kind of work to relieve the French army.

I cannot tell you why it was necessary for the American Ambulance Corps to do this because of an oath I had to take before entering the war zone. Briefly, I joined the

service with about 90 other Yale men who came over on the La Touraine.

I am now a regularly enlisted soldier in the French army and under fully commissioned French officers in command, and in the part of the army called the army service, or Transport Corps but we are all in an American division and, by the way, I found my two cousins, Z. G. Simmons and Lucien Lance, from Kenosha, Wis., in the same corps.

The section to which I am attached is a movable one and moves up and down the whole French battle front, only being used where the increased fighting demands it, so I expect to see the whole front before long, but have the privilege of quitting at the end of six months if I wish.

The work of the transports consists, of course, in transporting munitions from the depots to the big artillery emplacements, or the smaller batteries, as the case may be.

The trucks are monstrous five-tonners but very easily handled, as I have found out. We move along the roads in convoy or "truck train" fashion, 20 trucks and 40 men in each section (two drivers to a car).

The work is slightly more dangerous than the ambulance work, as the convoys are under concentrated shell fire about one-half the time their work is being done, and as we sometimes have to carry tons of lyddite, ammonia and dynamite for guns and trench mines, there is not much chance if a truck should be hit, but really after all, the percentage of chance is much in favor of the drivers, as the work is all done at night.

It is almost pitiful to hear some of the French soldiers talk about the "grande armee des Etats Unie," as they expect it to take the place of the whole, or a great part of the French army, to thus give France a relief.

Things have come to such a state that in the very front French lines men of 50 are serving, side by side, with boys younger than myself.

An aviator who came out here with us on the troop train told us that France had borne the whole brunt of the war up till last September, when the English first really got into action and that France has already lost 4,000,000 men.

You can have no conception of how beautiful this country is until you have actually seen it. The country is indescribable in its perfect green cultivation and as for Paris, there can be no other city in the world like it in beauty. Riding through France today you would hardly know that a war was going on if it were not for a few conspicuous things—you see absolutely no men (unless physically unfit) who are not in uniform—the fields are cultivated, street cars and subways and a thousand other things done entirely by women.

Another thing that a visitor to Paris will notice is that at least four out of every five women on the streets and boulevards are dressed in deep mourning.

But here I go on writing a lot of stuff you could probably read in the paper any day, but these things impress themselves on my mind so much that I can hardly help telling about them.

Of course, you understand that I am not in action yet, but am in a camp training, where I will be for 10 days before leaving for the real work.

When I start in I will tell you more about it as I don't know so very much as yet. In the meanwhile, I am really enjoying myself immensely.

We have regular military discipline and the work is mighty hard, but I never felt huskier in my life and I am having a great time.

We have regular military drill with guns (each driver carries one with him on the truck) and have to wear the regular French army "casques" (light steel helmets) and always carry gas masks with us, but all this is an added precaution which we hope to have no need for. We are

being prepared though (as all the French army always is) for any emergencies.

Our camp is a beautiful little hollow in the woods and very comfortable. About ten yards from my bed are some old French trenches used against the Germans during the French retreat in 1914.

The food is very good and abundant, regular French army rations.

The only things we miss are candy and tobacco, neither one of these things can be had around here, and, by the way, no stationery, as you can see.

No one buys stamps inside the war zone, but just marks the letter as I have. I am forced to stop writing now by the darkness, as no lights are allowed.



*The following letter was received by Mr. C. F. Hartman, 511 East Twentieth street North, from his son, Corporal Otto C. Hartman, Co. F, 18th Engineers, Railway:*

The censor just stopped me to have some chocolate, and as candy, etc., are at a premium, I permitted the interruption, and considered it justifiable.

The best I can wish anyone who has not volunteered is that he be caught in the draft. Thirty days over here would convince him that the civilized world was very near to destruction, through the insane ambition of history's greatest egotist and his gang of murderous cut-throats.

The Allies surely have to thank their stars that Bismarck didn't live to mix his brains in this affair. The colossal stupidity of the German higher-ups is beyond comprehension.

The Prussian hounds didn't even have the intelligence to see that they couldn't base their knowledge of human nature on the actions of their own well-trained slaves. Their boasted kultur is a joke. The Germans to my mind are utterly ignorant. The idea of thinking for themselves has never entered their foolish heads. I'll bet Old Man Satan has been sitting up nights for the last three years figuring out a just reward for those who plunged the world into this war.

Everything is coming out right, though, thanks to your Uncle Sam. When the boys start on their big hike to Berlin next summer they will soon put an end to this reign of terror. But before this happens the American people want to brace themselves for some frightful losses, as it will take lots of men to put this over.

I am proud that I am an American. They are the greatest people on earth, and the rest of the world will soon realize it. You know when I get started on this

line, I talk in bunches, so if I have rambled a little, just remember I didn't come here to see the country.

Rex and I are both well and happy. We are being treated fine, and though we haven't gotten "down to cases" yet, hope to soon.

The rainy weather has set in, and we old Webfooters feel perfectly at home.

This is a great country for contrasts: Tobacco, 60 cents a can—for which we pay 10 cents in the United States. Can you beat it!

Freight cars that only hold from five to ten tons; the finest docks in the world; and drainage systems, that we would have been ashamed of 50 years ago; women that carry baskets on their heads, and wear wooden shoes during the week and doll up like an American chicken on Sunday. Inconsistency, your home is France.

You would laugh to hear us all trying to talk French. If the French people were not the politest people in the world I think they would spend most of their time laughing at us. Here is no conception of time. Speed is associated with but one thing, and that is automobile driving. The auto drivers never heard of the speed limit. Yours,

CORPORAL OTTO C. HARTMAN,

F Co., 18th Engineers, Railway.



*Marion Kyle, a Portland boy, who went to France with the American Ambulance Service, later transferring to the French Aviation Service, writes the accompanying letter descriptive of his training for the air service:*

Our aviation training began at Avord, where there is a huge camp with some 1000 machines. We trained first on a Bleriot monoplane, then on a biplane, on which we obtained our brevet, and then I was posted, on the decision of the French army, to take Nieuport work and become a "pilote de chasse." After thinking the matter over, however, I decided to go to the front at first on a bombardment machine, and, accordingly, asked the commandant of the camp to shift me, which he did. I was then put on a Schmidt bombing plane, and given two weeks' training on that and told I was finished and ready to go to Plessin-Belleville to get the training in the machine we go to the front in.

On arriving at Plessin several of us were immediately shipped off to a center of aviation about 10 miles back of the lines and given 10 days' more training on Paul Schmidt. While here I was almost overtaken with disaster. I went up with a passenger one foggy day, and before I knew it was lost. We had no compass and steered in the direction of what we supposed was the camp. After 15 minutes I nosed the machine down until I could see the ground to make a reconaissance, and found we were over the German lines, with the trenches about a mile in our rear. I plunged back into the fog and came about face in short order. We wasted no time in getting back into French territory, and finally the fog lifted and we found the aerodrome again.

Am now back at Plessin-Belleville flying the actual machine we fly at the front, and am only waiting to be assigned to an escadrille to go out. We do night flying as well as day flying, and the machine surely is wonderful. It carries two men, four machine guns and a ton of

bombs, and with this load goes 107 miles an hour at a height of 15,000 feet. The engine is 300 horsepower, and is a Renault-Mercedes. The machine climbs a mile and one-third in eight minutes.

The night flying is somewhat difficult, especially the landing. We have a red light on one wing and a green light on the other to signal and at the same time show us the inclination of the wings. One has to steer by compass, and on moonlight nights by rivers and canals, which gleam far below as silvery ribbons. In the day bombing we always go in formation of from 10 to 100, with "chasse machines" hovering around as additional protection. One cannot hear the shells from the anti-aircraft on account of the roar of the motor which almost deafens one. All you can see are fluffy bursts of smoke which seem very impersonal unless one of them hits you and takes off a wing, in which case there comes a drop of 15,000 feet to the earth. We have to travel at that height on our expeditions. Formation flying is very difficult, as one can hardly keep his place exactly with so many other machines, but if one gets separated he will be picked off by a squadron of Boche fighting planes.

The actual danger in flying is not very great. Avord is a school which maintains 800 pilots and out of this number there were 40 killed while I was there. Three of the 200 American boys were killed in training. One of these, Hanford, was a special friend of mine and was killed while we were making a trip together. Part of our brevet test was to make two 300-mile trips. Hanford and I started out about the same time one afternoon to make the first leg of the triangle, which was the aerodrome at Chateau Roux, not far from Orleans. It took us about one hour, passing over a beautiful pastoral country and watching the cattle grazing in the rich pastures and the peasants in the fields. I was ahead, and had just landed when I heard a terrific crash, and, looking up, saw that Hanford had collided with a Farman biplane at a



height of 2000 feet. They both fell like stones, and machines and pilots were broken to bits. I didn't feel much like continuing the trip, but had to and finished alone.

The boys used to have imaginary motor trouble and make forced landings at the beautiful chateaus in which the region abounds. Here they would be entertained for two days until the mechanic crews from the aerodromes could come out to see what was the trouble. Several had very funny adventures in this way. The captain of the school noticed, however, where all the forced landings were occurring, and put a stop to the practice.

I had some landings like that and remained a couple of days with a count and his family, comprising some beautiful young mademoiselles. Of course an American aviator was a novelty to have land at your front door, so we had quite a time all around. I played tennis, drank tea, and likewise forgot the war for 48 charming hours.



*Mrs. J. F. Barrett, 266 North Twenty-first street, received from her son, Gerald, the following letter:*

France, October 2, 1917.

Dear Mother:

Today has been an unusual one for me. First, I went to the funeral of the first man of this regiment to die on the soil of France and I gained an insight into French customs. He was taken sick with pneumonia and on Sunday evening died. I believe Jack knew him on the Coos Bay job while he was with the S. P. He was an engineer at the Marshfield headquarters. Allan V. Mercer was his name. Everyone in the company liked him, so losing him makes us feel it. The whole company marched out and did him the last bit of respect he will be shown on earth, for only the memory of him lives with us now. The military funeral is much more inspiring than that of civil life. The band came first, the firing squad next, and the hearse, guarded by the members of Mercer's squad, followed. The officers and men of the company, followed by the nurses, ended the line. The sermon was short and good, which is far better than the flowery efforts we sometimes hear. The service was completed by a volley and "Taps." The French people show much more respect for a funeral than we do at home. As it passes by, all traffic stops and men take off their hats and incline their heads. They say over here that we are too fast and work too hard. The world over here moves slower. Every once in a while some incident springs up that shows it. I was using a tool and working hard for a few minutes and when I looked up a small crowd of Chinese troops was standing there gaping and laughing because I was sweating. Another time, a French army engineer asked us why we worked so hard when the sun was so hot. Every day as we return from work we climb a hill to the camp. The weather here until November is like August at home, so

by the time we reach the top we are wet. The people laugh at us for our hill-climbing efforts. "Why should we get so uncomfortable and hot when we could keep cool?" Nevertheless, things are beginning to move and results are beginning to show. During the midday all shops close for an hour and a half while the people eat. Again at 6 they have a light meal, and between 7 and 8 have the day's big meal. Today I was asked if the inside of my puttees were stuffed or was it the calf muscles. The French take a slow, swinging gait, while our army takes a fast, short step that is springy. Our legs are naturally bigger than the French, who, as a rule, have thin calves. Our walk was amusing to the people when we first landed here. If you want to do a favor to the 18th tell a few people to put a one-cent stamp on their Oregonians and Journals and address them to the 18th Engineers, Railway, Army P. O. 705 A. E. F. Old Saturday Evening Posts, etc., are more than welcome. One thing about the army life is that the high cost of shoe leather affects us not. We are given good shoes and are not supposed to have them half-soled. Before the war is over the shoe bill will be a staggering affair. The shoes over here are not the dress pattern, but are heavy boots built for wear. Tents have been discontinued long ago over here and portable huts replace them. My idea of an army camp has always been associated with tents, but now it is huts with fly-proof kitchens and baths. The system now is to have reserves and reliefs, while one brigade is in the trenches another is resting at a camp. In a fortnight they go in again. The plan of diving in and keeping the men there until killed off is replaced by the plan of reliefs, consequently the disease loss is greatly lessened. The opportunity to see the front will be given us later, but now we are getting ready for the army that is coming next spring. An Australian has been with us for a few days, and as he is on leave for ten days or more, he is staying here. Troops from across the ocean cannot go

home like others. He has been telling us of conditions in the trenches and the various battles he has been in. The Australians and Canadians and Americans have a peculiarity of their own. Instead of holding a position for months they become restless and take a few more. The newer countries furnish the hardest fighting troops. They can't accept a condition as it is, but sail in and raise Hades to advance. The way the Canadians and Australians handle bayonets is remarkable. More than one regiment has suffered losses from its own artillery fire because it advanced too fast. The "Princess Pats," a famous Canadian regiment, has been annihilated because of its own unstopable advances. I met a man from this troop not long ago. Our Australian friend showed us a few bayonet stunts the other day. I used to think I knew something about bayonet defense, but if I ever met one of his like I hope there is a bullet left in my rifle. The Australians go into a fight with the idea of getting three men, and they usually do it, too. The Germans have saw-tooth bayonets and knives on the butts of rifles, etc., but they can't stand up before the clean hand drive of these fellows. Troops that go into the fight to fight and those that are driven in usually have a one-sided argument. Americans have much the same pep, and I think when we come here in force the German ebb will swing much faster. The Germans are tricksters from way back. Some will pick up a fine looking helmet and, Fowie! he and his nearby comrades will be shattered to pieces. Another trick is to sap a small mine so that when you kick a clod of dirt or pick up anything you will be blown up. The tendency of men prone is to pick anything that may be in the way. The Germans utilize this to kill us off. Another cute trick is to play wounded. In days of yore, it was no more than human to give a wounded enemy a drink. Now your enemy pistles you while you are uncorking your bottle. The Allies do not take so many prisoners. I don't blame them and would not do so, either. An enemy

that stoops to inject disease of all kinds into the captured women deserve anything they get.

It is not the individual that I despise, but the leaders of the race who will force their subjects to do such deeds and force into their minds such base and absolutely false ideas of other civilized peoples.

If these subjects must be sacrificed to put this government out of power they must go. Germany is an expanding nation and is using scientific savagery to satisfy the wild fancies of a brute. People are willing to die for self-government, and reading of it in history, perhaps, doesn't give us the full meaning of it. When one man can make millions die to satisfy his desires, can you blame those who go? I think I have raved enough for one letter. Yours, lovingly,

PRIVATE GERALD BARRETT.



*Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Clark, 900 Northrup street, received the following letter from their son, Private A. B. Clark, Co. F, 18th Regular Engineers, Railway:*

Somewhere in France.

Dear Father and Mother:

I suppose you wondered why I did not cable when I landed on this side, but it was because at the time I was running low on cash. We spent so much on the boat for "extras." Bought from a "canteen" (army word for store) which they had on board and we practically lived out of it. Then I knew you'd hear of our safe arrival from different sources, so I let it go. We were two weeks on the water and it got awfully tiresome, owing to our "mode of travel," which was a far cry from the way we crossed four years ago, but I suppose it was pretty fair for a troop ship.

We stopped a day at three different "rest camps" after landing, until we arrived at this place, and between two of those places I got a letter from you, handed to me while riding in a box car, which certainly looked good to "yours truly," with the C. Lbr. C. heading, etc., and, last but not least, the check that was in it. That put me on my feet again, so I will be sailing from now on. I got it cashed in camp yesterday with Captain Hauser's endorsement. A representative from a bank in the nearest city came out to cash and exchange money. Thanks very, very much for it. We have been here at ostensibly our final destination three days now, and are just resting.

It's a beautiful spot and a very safe one, and from a little talk that Captain Hauser gave informally last night, the prospects ahead of us are very fine, so none of you need to worry a minute about any of us. I am in the best of health, feeling A-1 about everything. I find it easy to acclimate myself to conditions and, like a good many of the rest, I think it will just be a matter of time and not

too great a one either, before we shall see each other again. This letter will be disappointing to you, I know, because it will lack the many details which you all would be interested in hearing about our trip and everything about us, but all I can say is that we have *very* strict censorship rules about writing. I hope they won't always be so, but at present to overstep them would be to have the letters thrown out en route. We may get a week-end rate on cablegrams and answers soon, and I will probably wire you once in a while. I've had a couple of glimpses of General Pershing lately. He is the most military looking person and has the most commanding personality of anyone I have seen around here so far. Very strict and particular about things military. There isn't an awful lot of that painful "form" around here, though, because practically everyone, officers and men, have come direct from civil life. We all hope that next year will see the end, but it is all a gamble. The recent blow on the Italian front has been a very serious one. However, as I said before, there is no cause to worry about us here. We hardly know there is a war, so far. I don't feel any nearer to it than I did at American Lake. I've been hearing an unusual number of whistles on the ——— this morning. I think some troops are arriving. They say some national guardsmen are on their way over here. I wish you would wrap up a Sunday Oregonian once in a while and send it over. We crave news of any kind.

We have a bunch of German prisoners working about camp here and they are the most contented lot I have ever seen. They have said that they are treated well and prefer this much more than real war. The French people that I have seen have been very cordial and, if you will forgive the pun—their Cordial is very fine. I have had some, but not plenty. Before long I think I will be able to jabber a bit with them, and that will make things pleasanter. I suppose mother had a nice visit over in Spokane. I wish I would get the letter that she wrote

me from there. I am very glad that she went for the rest and the change. There is one thing I would like to have very much from home. I came away without a picture of any sort of any of you. Don't know how it happened. I would like a medium-sized folding leather case that will hold five pictures. I would like to have them separate, if possible. If you will fix it up and send it over for a Christmas present, you couldn't do anything that would please me more. Tell me all about yourselves and prospects. Write all the news of the town and people. Please do it often. I want news more than ever in my life before. Well, it is most time for mess, so I stop, but will write you often and hope that you will do the same. Tell me everything and anything from the weather to whether the handle it still on the front door. With much love to all of you.

AL.





*Mrs. George A. Noyes received the following from her son:*

Somewhere in France, September 7, 1917.

Dear Little Mother and All:

I have been looking for a letter ever since I have been in France, but our mail has been delayed somewhere. However, I did receive a letter en route.

Europe is surely some country, all that I have seen of it. London is a grand old city. I went to church at Westminster Abbey. It surely is a beautiful structure—very old and good for years to come. It is only one of many interesting things. Such funny trains and trained streetcars. The houses are all built of brick and all together. All the same apartments, with no yards. The country also is beautiful; every bit of it utilized. France, too, has her share of beauty. The French people, as a race, are surely kind. Seems to be nothing too good for the soldiers, and they are surely strong for the American soldiers. We have a splendid camp here. Brand-new with wooden barracks and very comfortable. We are near a little French village, where I go each night. We are not far from a large city and we can go there every fourth day for over night, so you see our treatment is the very best, so do not worry. I am far away from the firing line. Please do not worry, but try to keep smiling. Austin is still at home, or nearby, at least, and you can see him once in a while. I haven't the slightest idea how long we will be here. However, I shall not miss any time in getting home when we are through, for the U. S. will look good to Earls court. I am not disappointed, for the treatment received is of the best. I must write to Austin, so will close and say good-bye.

With worlds of love to you, I am, ever your son,

EARLSCOURT.

*From Private Renfro, Co. F, 18th Regular Engineers, Railway, to his mother, Mrs. W. J. Renfro, 41 Jessup street.*

Somewhere in France, September 5, 1917.

Dear Folks:

We are at last in France, very comfortably situated. This is a beautiful country. Fruit is very plentiful. The French people are very kind to us. It is interesting to watch the people in their different work. I went into a cafe to buy some bread. They were serving snails. The kind that crawl around with shells on their backs. Also served frog legs. How would you like to sit down to that? Not for me. I bought a loaf of bread for a half-franc (10 cents). It was about two and a half feet long, six inches wide. It sure was good with jam.

The Y. M. C. A. has opened up here in one camp. I can use pen and ink once more. We have comfortable benches and writing tablets; before I have done most of my letter writing with my tablet balanced on my knee. The Y. is doing great work among the boys here. The other day when the truck drove into camp with a load of Y. supplies a loud cheer was given out.

Be sure and tell the folks not to forget Christmas. It is funny to write that, now, but you will not receive this letter until late in October. It will take a long time for us to get things from home. Candy, fruit-cake, some of your good raisin cookies sure would make me feel as though I were with you all at Christmas time.

Tomorrow is Sunday. I am going to church in town to one of the old cathedrals, part of which was built in the year 800.

September 28th—Another week has passed and this Sunday finds me away from headquarters. I have been for several days. Have not been able to get my mail.

Grapes and peaches are plentiful around here and the French drink but one thing, that is a very poor grade of wine. The water here is very bad. I manage to get along without it.

October 2nd—At last we have a Chaplain from Seattle, Washington. He seems to be a very nice fellow. I had a short talk with him after the service. We had a good meeting. He made a good talk on the work of the Y.

It is raining today, but it is getting that time of the year when we can expect it. I was in town yesterday with James Benoit. We are both in the same company. It seems so strange that we should meet after so many years. Fifteen years ago we went to school together. We went to see the ruins of an old amphitheatre that was built 1800 years ago. It has been nearly all destroyed. Nothing much remaining but the massive arch-gateway and a small part of the wall. It is wonderful the way it has stood all these hundreds of years.

October 15th—Our quarters are very comfortable and I am very glad as the rainy season has set in. It has rained most every day for two weeks. I always try to come in town for Sunday to get a good warm bath, also a good dinner, which is good once a week. It is a pleasure to come to the Y. to read and write and enjoy comforts of home life.

October 27th—A large steamer came in from the States a couple of days ago. I was sure I would get mail of some kind. From all indications I expect to be home with you in September, 1918. Of course it depends on the outcome of the war.

The internal conditions of Germany are very bad, so we hear. The German soldiers are deathly sick of war and surrender themselves to the Allies at every opportunity. Many mere boys. We can only hope and pray that this terrible war will soon be over and peace shall reign once more among the civilized nations of the world.

I wish you would all write every week. You don't know how much happiness it puts into a fellow's life. I wish you could be around the camp on a day when the mail comes in. The happiest bunch in the world, all except the boy who didn't hear from home.

It makes a fellow want to be alone. He wonders why he did not hear from home.

Dear Little June: So she understands where I am and does she think I am building a bridge. I had a letter from Guy, he said they were busy handling troop trains going to American Lake. I am afraid that people have not awakened to the fact that they are at war. I think they will by the first of the year begin to realize it. I am looking forward to some good home-made candy, fruit-cake and cookies. I hope I get them before long. Sunday we had service in the Y. tent. In the evening we had a short song service, also a big camp-fire and sang after the minister gave us a fine talk, which we all enjoyed.

If any one should come collecting to buy for the soldiers, steer clear of everything but the Red Cross Society and the Y. M. C. A. They are the only ones doing anything for us. This is all for this time.

Your loving son,

E. S. RENFRO.



*Received by Mrs. E. A. Benoit, 836 East 29th street, Portland, Oregon.*

Somewhere in France.

Dear Mother:

Received your welcome letter and a big box of candy from the girls; also letters and papers from Winifred and Anna. Believe me, I was glad "Fritz" did not get them.

I have missed going to church but one Sunday, the first in France, as I was on guard.

The Y. M. C. A. is surely doing a great work here. They have music, reading, refreshments, and everything else a fellow would expect to find in his home.

I will try and answer a few of your questions: First, about the weather, which I would say is somewhat on a par with Oregon. It is a bit chilly as a rule when it rains, but ordinary clothing will keep one warm. We have boots, rubber trousers and slickers. Last week we used them almost all the time but Sunday; yesterday and today have been sunshiny. We have had our overcoats for over a month and believe me, they are warm and fine.

I know everything will be done right, as all the boys have faith in Capt. Hauser. Our mail has been coming fine. I am lucky enough to get something in every mail. Don't worry about us boys as we are in as good a situation as could be expected and we have got the "family spirit" in Company F. I think we are the most envied company of the regiment.

Write as often as you can. Send anything you think I will enjoy but do not go to much expense or trouble. Give my best regards to all the friends and love to all you folks.

Your loving son,

PRIVATE JAMES T. BENOIT,

Co. F, 18th Engineers, Railway.

P. S.—Don't worry.

*Judge Robert S. Bean, of the United States District Court, has received a letter from his son, Harold C. Bean, describing life in an advanced hospital dressing station just behind the front line trenches of the British army in France.*

My Dear Father and Mother and Folks:

Here I am, down in a comfortable dugout, listening to the pound of the Bosche's shells overhead and the joyful sound of our big guns answering back, with many times the number he sends over. As you know, I did not crave this situation, but things fell so as to put me here according to orders, so I am making the best of it, and it is not so very bad, even when one thinks of being under fire, within a few hundred yards of the German line.

We are stationed at what is called the advance dressing station, usually located within a few hundred yards of all the regimental posts, so the stretcher-bearers will not have so long a distance to carry the wounded; and also so they will reach us as soon as possible after they are injured.

All stations are not alike, some in houses, basements or even tents, but this present one is in a large cellar that has been reinforced with steel and concrete. We can handle about 50 men at the same time, and quarters for as many or more men of our unit. Have an improvised operating room where all dressings are put on and hemorrhages checked. No real operations are attempted this far in advance.

After a case is dressed and made a little more comfortable, he is placed in a waiting ambulance and driven back some six or seven miles to the casualty clearing station, where all operations are performed. The Bosche has apparently taken a dislike to wounded and hospitals as you have noticed in recent papers, so he gives us a reception each evening with what the British Tommy calls "iron

rations," but I am glad to say usually without any injury as our shelter is well made and strong.

There are three medical officers on duty here at a time, and then we are relieved, week in and week out. But the few days I have been up here we have been very busy, especially with gas cases. They are throwing over now a new gas, smelling like mustard, but very disabling if one does not use the mask at once. All dugouts, etc., are protected by large, heavy blankets saturated with chemicals so as to keep the heavy vapor out.

Just day before yesterday he gave us a shower of gas shells. Apparently the cloud gas is not used much now, but instead he sends the gas in small shells that cause a peculiar sound as they pass through the air and this helps in warning us. They do not make much noise as they explode, but at once give off this peculiar smoke. Usually night time is the favorite chance, so the other evening he began to throw them at us; at once our sentry spotted the smell and warned everyone, yet in spite of this we all got enough to have sore eyes, slight cough, sore throat and groggy feeling, all day yesterday, but today am feeling fine.

All day we had many poor, tired men seriously affected by this terrible stuff, and the sight is not easy to stand—brave, young fellows who fight to the last and hate to give in to the stuff, but are compelled to do so. I am glad to say that after several days the majority of them recover and can return to their regiments.

Just the night we had our gas attack they shelled our ambulance standing in front here and destroyed the same, but fortunately no one was in it at the time. We all live, work, eat and sleep in this one place, so we are safe, and the sound of our own artillery at our backs and near us is wonderfully consoling, for "Fritz" is getting more than he is giving our side.

But how eager every one is for this terrible struggle to be over. Some of the men have not been on leave for two years and others have been home and back again. I have

only been here a few weeks, yet I have had plenty and am eager to return to my own country. Wouldn't it be fine if it were all over by Christmas, as the men often talk of?

As the Tommy says: "Cheer on," for everything is coming out all right and I am coming back to you safe and sound. Don't worry, and write when you can.

Your loving son,

HAL.





*From "Somewhere on the Other Side" comes the following letter to the family of Mrs. J. H. Urdahl from H. P. Urdahl, now serving with the Eighteenth Engineers, leaving Portland several weeks ago.*

Dear Folks:

We have been traveling nearly a month and have not arrived at our destination yet. I don't know where we are going but I think we will be on our way in a day or two. Things are very much different here than they are in the States. We don't get any news from the front and I don't think that we know as much about what is happening there as you do, yourself.

Most of the boys got to visit London, but I was on guard duty and didn't get to go. I think I will be off today to visit this town this afternoon. I met an English soldier who has been in the service for 16 years and had been all around the world. He took me around and showed me some of their big field guns which are surely wicked looking and very heavy. All the trains and streets in all the towns are full of soldiers and the people are all living war. They are very glad to see American boys and surely treat us fine.

I have not received any mail since I left American Lake and I don't know when they will deliver any to us boys. The effects of this war can be seen on most of the people one meets. You can only have a certain amount to eat in any of the restaurants, and if you don't have enough to eat in one place you will have to go to another place and finish your meal. They serve us with war bread, which is very good. It is a little darker than our coarse bread at home.

The construction work that has been done over here surely is great. They don't have any very high buildings and very little wood has been used here, mostly brick. The railroads and docks are wonderful. The coaches are noth-

ing like ours and freight equipment is not very heavy as about 10 tons is the most they will carry. I don't know how they move a piece of machinery weighing 50 or 100 tons unless they take it apart.

Say, when you people want to send me anything, send me some cigarettes, as I have not been able to find anything to smoke over here that I like. A friend of mine wired his wife when we landed here and she was going to call you up and let you know that we arrived safe. Let me know if you received this news. I also heard that there was report in the States that the Eighteenth Engineers were attacked and sunk by the U-boats, but we didn't even see one of them. The next time you hear from me it will come from France unless we stay here longer than I expect. You have my address so I won't write it again and will close with love and kisses to you all.

HANS P. URDAHL.



*Mrs. D. H. Lyman, 305 East 70th street, received from her son, J. D. Lyman, who is in active service with the American Expeditionary Forces, the following letter:*

On Active Service with American Expeditionary  
Force, "Somewhere," Oct. 23, 1917.

Dear Mother:

This is the first opportunity I have had to write you for about a week and have been very busy and have seen some very interesting things lately. I wish I could tell you about them but it is impossible.

I am well and having everything I want to eat, etc. Life in France is getting to be better every day and the more you see the more you want to see everything. If the war lasts long enough I will be a sure enough Frenchman when I come back as I am learning it pretty fast—not to speak it so much as to understand it. Where I am now located I am more or less thrown in with the French people.

There is nothing I want that you can send me as you said in your last letter.

The weather has been fine here for the last week or so with one or two fogs, but today it rained the good old Oregon rain, but it has cleared up tonight and the moon shines fairly bright through the rifted clouds.

I got a letter today from the Captain and he says everything is going on fine and all the boys are in good health and working hard. Not saying that I am not, for I am working pretty hard and am nearly "fatigued" at night—(French for "tired").

You will notice from my new address that I am not stationed with the Company.

There is an entertainment for the soldiers here tonight so will close as it is about to begin.

Give my best regards to everybody.

Love to all,  
DICK.

*Miss Roxanna Shroyer, Tudor Arms Apartments, received the following letter from her brother, James R. Shroyer, 13th Regiment Engineers, Railway.*

Somewhere in France.

Since leaving Liverpool have been very much on the move. I will not be able to name places or go into much detail. You, no doubt read in the papers of the reception in London. The crowds went wild. The King and the Queen were there. I was not there at the time. We being the advance agents were there the morning before and fixed it up with George. Our detachment of 34 men then went to an English port and out to a large rest camp, a fine place and clean. Spent from 2:30 to 6:00 soaking in a bath; stayed there two days till rest of regiment came along. We boarded a captured German boat for France; arrived at French port at dawn. The people all came running to the water front and cheered, but we were not allowed to answer. We worked all day until nine in the evening unloading boats and loading train. We marched to the train, but could have no lights on account of danger of Zeps, which were at large looking for Americans, either in England or France; had a tiresome ride in these funny trains; were met at the station by a French band and crowds of people. We marched to the barracks amid much chatter and funny music. Saw a real air battle yesterday and two today and it was some sight to see five officers' machines going for each other.

The places about here look as natural as could be expected and, though the Germans were here, there is no evidence, but about a couple hours' walk will take one to some old trenches and ruins.

Had a big parade yesterday, also inspection and review by a high jinx French General, who had lost an arm and leg in the early part of the war. He had Spalding's Jewelry Shop skinned a mile for decorations.

Sweets are very high here on account of tax. No white bread or cakes; am going to do some washing so will stop awhile.

Have just returned from a sixty-five mile trip around the front and have seen some wonderful things, but will have to refrain from writing about them, as the censor forbids. The last letter I wrote September 18 I was in the French hospital, but now I am feeling fine; had a great time making my nurses understand; had to talk with my hands; suppose you read in the papers that our regiment was the first of Americans to put the Grand Old Flag on the front. We received quite a write-up in Paris edition of New York Herald and Chicago Tribune. Quite some honor for a bunch of rookies. Sunday three of us took a stroll about the famous Argonne forest and had a fine trip. We stopped at a funny house and the obliging French women cooked us a fine meal. Egg-omelette, French fried potatoes, bread, etc. We sure enjoyed it. Returning we proceeded to get ready for our nightly raid of the Germans. They sure have been after us with their aeroplane bombs, and machine guns and they kick up some dust. Speaking of dust, when I came in tonight I was white from the dusty roads. We passed trench trains, wagon trains and soldiers in endless lines, all raising their quota of powdered stone. If you people could have looked in on us last night when the mail came in, you would neglect some of the home duties and write often. The barracks resembled Christmas Eve. The floor was covered with package wrappings; everybody passing candy, cigarettes, etc. Reading papers, clippings and letters. One of the fellows came in with the mail and yelled, "Xmas has come."

I have seen it rain in Oregon, Illinois and Montana, but never really knew what rain was until the past week. I saw lots of water coming over, but I have seen more water here than I thought was in the world. It is pretty chilly here; tell the boys to bring at least two sweaters. One to sleep in and one to wear during the day. I do not know

what I would have done without mine. Tell them to bring plenty of socks, the heavy kind.

Wish you would send me a package of None-such mince-meat and I will make a pie. I don't believe I could go in and *sit down* to a meal. I have become so accustomed to standing in line with a mess-kit and clamoring for "chow." Just now I think I would give "cive quante francs" for a good old hot bath in a tub. The French think we are all crazy because we bathe so much. Until it got too cold, we took our baths under the water hydrants. I would not give one inch of the Willamette slough for all of France.

JAMES R. SHROYER,  
13th Regular Engineers.



*The following is taken from letters recently received by Mr. and Mrs. James F. Morrell from their two sons with Co. F, 18th Engineers, Railway, "Somewhere in France."*

Somewhere in France,

November 18th, 1917.

Dear Mother and Father:

Last mail received yesterday brought in the Auxiliary packages and we had "some time" last night, stayed up till eleven-thirty o'clock, singing all the songs we knew and smoked; these boys are just like a bunch of children at a Christmas tree.

The socks are sure fine and have put them away for cold weather. Army life is not so bad when you have a lot of boys like we have in this company with an auxiliary at home.

Have been setting up a pump and gas engine and building a shed for same, so it is the work of defeating the "Huns" is on its way.

Here comes the paper boy with the Chicago Tribune and everyone is reading at once about the fun at the front.

It would tickle you to see these Frenchmen when they take a smoke of real tobacco—there goes the whistle and Jim is on the other end of it, me for the mess hall, more later.

Supper is over and I feel much better; a package from brother, Art, came this evening, containing a pound of Prince Albert tobacco for both Jim and myself and so you see all the folks at home are thinking of us.

Too weary tonight to write much so will close with love to both of you.

"Judge."

PRIVATE WILLIAM J. MORRELL.

Somewhere in France,  
November 18th, 1917.

Dear Folks:

Well the effect of the love and appreciation which started in a big wave at the Portland Auxiliary of this company has finally reached France in the shape of mail sacks and while the contents were heartily greeted by all, to me, it brought a big lump up in my throat, for never in my life have I ever witnessed so large an offering of love and know that same was prepared with no little thought and preparation.

You can tell the members of the Auxiliary that it would have done their hearts good to sit where I did and see the expressions of happiness, coupled with surprise, on receiving their shares, it was like Christmas, each boy, for that's all they are, shot eager glances at the pile and commented in his own way, all speaking words of praise for the effort put forth, so in speaking for myself I want to say that I cannot find words to thank each and every one; it is this spirit of co-operation and harmony that will win this war.

I wish you folks at home could see these boys work. I have seen and handled lots of men at the same kind of work but have never beheld the same spirit and whole-hearted effort put forth as they do, each one seems very happy and contented. We are having some cool, clear weather and it goes fine, have second steam shovel well under way and am opening a pit for the first one; will start digging about Wednesday.

Wish I could happen in on you at Christmas but will be with you in spirit and mayhap the next one will bring us all together. Co. F is going to have a semi-annual gathering Thanksgiving Day. We are going to have music, songs and several acts; will write you all about it later.

Will close now and get this in the mail. Give my love to all; with love to you and Dad,

"Jim."

SERGEANT JAMES F. MORRELL.



*Iliff J. Vinson, 18th Engineers, Railway, Co. F, writes to his mother, Mrs. B. E. Vinson, 1024 Holgate street:*

In England, August 27, 1917.

Dear Father, Mother and Sister:

After a journey of 24 days since leaving American Lake, landed in this country. Our voyage was a pleasant one. We never saw a "Sub" or were troubled at all by them.

Most of our Company went to London yesterday and gave the city the once over. The boys that I was with visited the Tower of London, London Bridge, the House of Lords—oh, well, I can't begin to tell you of the different things we saw.

You should see the funny little railroad cars and engines they have in this country. When I come home, I am going to bring one with me as a souvenir. Believe me, they sure can go some.

We don't know just when we shall be ordered to France. Did you receive the cablegram I sent you?

Somewhere in France—It is a nice, bright day. Sun shining well up in the sky. Of course, we don't have sunshine all of the time. For instance, the other evening, it rained very hard for a while and the boys began to undress and come out to get their favorite bath. One can get a very good bath with a bar of soap and a very little rain. Lord, how it can rain in this country. It has Oregon backed off the map. Well, it is very near time to eat again and I am sure going to be there.

Tell my friends I send my best wishes and that I am glad that I am in active service. I am learning quite a little of this language and our band is progressing very well.

We received a cablegram from Mr. Hauser, our Captain's father, telling us of the Auxiliary in Portland for Companies E and F of the 18th Engineers. The boys

think it very nice of our folks to think of our needs. I have just finished getting myself cleaned up and have a few minutes before church at the Y. M. C. A. so will put in the time writing a letter. Yesterday we played our first funeral march (the band). We played for one of our comrades from Company F, who was killed a few days ago by accident. The military funeral of the U. S. Army is very touching and it means a great deal in reality. We are all getting along very well and no one is suffering for anything but American tobacco. A good many of the boys are at the Y. M. C. A. this morning writing letters and playing games. They also have a moving picture machine here and I have been elected to run some pictures for the night. The band has been quite in demand lately. Well, must close now as the Chaplain has arrived and is about to start services.

With lots of love,

Your son,

ILIFF.



*Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Legg, 1570 East 6th street, North, received the following letter from their son, Maynard W. Legg, who is with the American Expeditionary Forces "Somewhere in France":*

Somewhere in France,

November 10, 1917.

My Dear Parents:

I am well and in the best of spirits. It is a little cold here as the winter weather is beginning. I went walking last evening and saw partridges galore. How I wished for a shot-gun. I would have made them sit up and take notice. I have seen some very nice double-barrel guns and some bad ones. One I noticed in particular had the hammer on top of the barrel instead of at the end and the shell had a brass pin about 5 inches long and extended out of the side of the shell at the back. The primer is entirely inside the shell, the butt was plain. I am going to try and get one to bring home as a souvenir, not to use, as I do not care to die yet. I am taking lessons in French, the Professor certainly knows his business. The people here go through the camp on Sundays for a walk. A bunch of French girls are bothering the typewriter now as I am trying to write this. You can say what you please, Oregon girls are best. They have the whole world beat. I got hold of a Sunday Oregonian and it surely looked good to me. Don't worry, I am satisfied where I am and I want to stay here as long as the Commander will have me. I am under Lieut. Roosevelt (Teddy's younger son), a better man I never have met, always jolly, is kind and considerate, yet firm. There are twenty Oregon boys in this company. I was driving a Packard truck for a while, then I worked in the hangars on aeroplanes and am now in the supply house. I was made Chauffer the 7th of November. It is

a new rank. I do not know the pay but was very glad to be advanced. I am glad you liked the souvenirs from New York. I have all sorts of souvenirs to bring home. I had a half of pumpkin pie today. It was good but not like home. If you will look in Leslie's Weekly, October 6, you will see two pictures of us as aviators. It rains nearly every day and just pours and the mud is deep. We have hip boots and are glad to have them. They surely save on clothes. I received the tobacco and was glad to get it, as the French tobacco is fierce. I cannot smoke it. There was only one thing the matter with the tobacco you sent, father, it did not last long. I am sending a couple of packages to you for Xmas. This is a great country for dahlias. I have seen many beautiful ones in private gardens this fall, also saw some in England. I must say good night now,

Your loving son,

MAYNARD.



*Corporal J. C. Collins, Co. F, 18th Engineers, Railway, writes to his mother, Jessie B. Collins, 636 East 20th street, from "Somewhere in France":*

Somewhere in France,

November 1, 1917

Dear Mother:

We received a large shipment of mail day before yesterday. I drew three of yours, delayed somewhere. I did not get the tobacco you sent but several of the boys did receive some and they divided so we are pretty well fixed for a while. It has been raining hard for the past few days, but we have been working just the same. "Uncle" has given us raincoats and boots and we keep fairly dry. I am gradually getting into my own work. The time passes rapidly and the Sundays come around quite often. I took a train and went up the line last Sunday about 20 miles to a little city of fifteen thousand. Americans are rather scarce there and to some I was a curiosity. I met a French Lieutenant and we had quite a long talk. If he could have spoken better English or I better French, it might not have been so long. He studied English in the French schools but with the aid of a dictionary we got along nicely. He took me to a cafe and we had coffee and cigars and talked about the war, America, England and France. The French soldiers wear caps. They all seem to admire our uniforms. This officer admired mine so much that he wanted me to buy him a hat and a pair of shoes. I told him I could hardly do that, so he compromised by putting on my hat and overcoat and I took his picture. This town is like all other French towns, very old. I went to a church, built in the 13th century. The carvings are very beautiful. All the window frames and arches are of carved stone. Their churches are all large, with high

steeple. The steeple of this one is carved to the top. The boys spend their evenings in the house, playing cards, reading, writing, singing and talking about what they are going to get in the next mail. The Y. M. C. A. is still in a tent, but we have a stove in our hut and I am writing on my bunk, as the fire is low and the candle about burned out, I will have to close for tonight.

Lovingly,  
J. C.



*From Wade D. Lewis, Expeditionary Forces in France, son of County Treasurer, John M. Lewis, 604 East Ankeny street:*

Somewhere in France,  
October 18, 1917.

Dear Mother:

Today is a holiday for all U. S. soldiers in France. A holiday set aside for the sale of Liberty Bonds to the enlisted men. Not so much for the purpose of raising any large amount of money for the loan as simply to disprove the German idea that the Americans are not whole-hearted in this war and that has been done. The bonds were in denominations as small as \$50.00 each and practically every man in the regiment took one or more bonds, except those who have already made large allotment to their folks at home. Some took three and four or more as in accordance with their pay. I took three \$50.00 bonds. Of course, I got some of the first loan, but as one does not have need for all his pay for personal necessities here I consider it not only a good personal investment but an aid to both the U. S. and French governments. The payments are easy, five dollars per month per bond. It simply amounts to a saving for the individual.

Just got back from town where I purchased a beef-steak, one-half dozen eggs, some butter and bread (du pain) and cooked some beef-steak and a couple of the eggs in my frying pan. Occasional rations like these are not uncommon with the boys. The French think we are terrible eaters and are astounded at the meals we order in their restaurants. One French maid asked me "If we Americans had come to eat up the French people."

Virgil and I are still taking lessons from the same family. It is not difficult to read ordinary French and get by in conversations. One of the girls, who is quite well

educated, brings up arguments on philosophy, religion and discussions on Victor Hugo works, etc. Her father is a Protestant and her mother a Catholic. When the matter of religion is brought up, the old gentleman always leaves the room. This French girl has a quaint way of bringing in old sayings from famous writers.

We are having much better weather now, somewhat cold but crisp and clear this afternoon. With the hope of more mail from home soon will again sign my lengthy address,

PRIVATE WADE V. LEWIS.





*Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Gordon, 1507 East 11th street, North,  
received the following letter:*

Somewhere in France,

November 10, 1917.

Dear Brother and Sister:

Your welcome letters received yesterday and was so happy to hear from you. We had a splendid voyage over here. The captain of the ship was the man who rescued the survivors of the Titanic. His name is Roston.

I was on guard at the bow, when at about 2:00 A. M. we sighted something that looked like land. It was the friendly and Oh, so welcome! beam of a lighthouse flashing on our port bow.

It is cold here, but so far it has not snowed. This winter will be a hard one for the boys in the trenches.

One of the boys of the hospital unit went up to the front and wrote back that it snowed about an inch last week.

It rains here nearly every day and when it rains it pours. It is great to lie in bed nights and hear the rain patter, patter through the trees.

You should see these big army trucks plowing through the mud; sometimes they get stuck and we all get out and push them out. I have two Frenchmen driving trucks now and you should see them dodging the trees; they are experts at the game.

We are unable to write often and it takes nearly a month to receive a letter. I believe we will have better mail service in the future because Uncle Sam has established a regular postoffice system in France. The Postmaster General and his assistants were here a few weeks ago and I was told they brought a number of mail clerks, etc., with them.

My regiment has been very lucky. We are now located some distance behind the firing line and I think we will remain here all winter. I hardly think we will get into anything serious at all before next spring. Some of the Railway Engineer Regiments have been into it already as you no doubt have learned from the casualty lists in the newspapers. Of course, we can never tell. I might be into it in another day, but I don't think so.

Four of the boys have a candle on the table on which they are playing cards and I am trying to write by the light that come between two of them. Ha, ha!

We are quartered in a nice warm building and they have furnished us with rubber pants, rubber coats, and rubber hats, so you see we don't suffer much from the weather.

I am well and in the best of health. My muscles are like bands of iron. We are doing very nicely under the circumstances, considering the nature of our business. The boys have accepted the dangers and hardships of war in a cheerful spirit.

You spoke of a newsy letter. I wish you were in my place and had to scratch your head to find something to say that the censor would pass. You haven't the least idea how rigid the U. S. censorship really is. I would like to write you a really newsy letter and tell you of many experiences.

You just read some good magazine articles or some good descriptive newspaper column of the fighting over here and you will learn more than I can tell you. I have read articles in magazines that I wouldn't dare write.

We are getting everything ready for the incoming troops. American troops are landing in France every day. General Pershing visited us two weeks ago today. I think I told you we were under his command. He is our ideal type of a fighting man. Stern, but kind. However, I think history will record that the Railway Engineers were the first of Pershing's men to get into action as a unit.

They were got under fire ahead of Pershing's first contingent. The Railway Engineers also had the first men killed in action. Ten days after we landed in France a Sergeant and a private were killed by shell fire. These men being the first men of the U. S. Army to die under fire. Of course there were some Americans killed previous to that time, but they were attached to the French Army.

I am in one of the largest cities in France. Have visited one of the famous Chateaus, also one of the famous art galleries of France. As you know I am a lover of art and the moments spent in viewing those beautiful pieces of art were very happy ones.

This is a beautiful country of many famous places. The women are wearing hats patterned after our service hats. I was glad to see the boys from home. Yes, I am acquainted with Sergeant Prasil. He attended school with me in Portland and was my tent mate while at American Lake. All the "boys" of my regiment are a cheerful and splendid lot of young men.

Well, I must close for this time. Give all my friends my best wishes and write often, for a letter from home makes me feel so happy. Love to all and kiss the babies for "Uncle Jack."

Lovingly,

JACK.

Sergeant J. W. Clay, Co. C, 18th Engineers, Railway.



*Mrs. C. F. Vilas, 56 East 74th street, North, received the following letter from her son, Private H. C. Vilas, Co. F, 18th Engineers, Railway:*

Somewhere in France,

November 4, 1917.

Dear Mother:

Tonight is a big night. We have been receiving a lot of back mail. I had received a letter dated October 7. Tonight I received two dated before that, also one from "sis" and one from Roy Higgins. We have plenty of rain here. The climate is about the same as Oregon, so you see most of us are used to it. We have been working pretty steadily for the past month and from the looks of things we have a big job ahead of us.

There is an old castle near here that dates back to the 12th century. It has a big mote and towers and reports say famous battles have been fought here. I also saw the ruins of an old Roman amphitheatre that was built about the 2nd century. There wasn't much of it left. I am getting so I can speak a little French, enough to make myself understood. French people know how to take things easy. Do not seem to worry about anything. If you could see them around the cafes, you would not think they were in war. They are great wine-drinkers, also fine pastry makers, the finest we have ever tasted. They have fine farms; the wealthy have pretty country homes or chauteaus as they are called. The next nice Sunday we have, a couple of us boys are going to hire bicycles and take a long ride in the country. The roads are fine here, lined on either side with maple trees. The wheel is the favorite mode of travel. As news is scarce this week, will close and do better next time. My love to all don't worry as everything is all right.

HAL.

*To Mrs. G. I. Dirrim, 1804 East 10th street from G. I.  
Dirrim, 18th Regiment Engineers, Railway, Co. E:*

Somewhere in France,

November 10, 1917.

Dear Mabel and Jim:

I received your letter this noon. Am feeling fine and have plenty to eat. Have plenty of clothes and we are as comfortable as possible and I don't think people need to worry about us freezing to death. Received the package you sent and we are looking for the box the Auxiliary sent. The letters and packages sure pleased the boys and I wish the people could see how much the boys appreciate those things. They have a prize fight on for tonight. One of the fellows in our company from Portland is boxing against a fellow in another company. I am getting along fairly well with the language and study hard whenever I have the chance. Everything looks rather bad and we may be here for a long time, though they may soon get lined up again. I went into a bakery to get a loaf of bread today, it looks like a four-foot stick of cord-wood, is fully three feet long and costs one and a half francs (30 cents in our money). Most of the women wear wooden shoes and carry baskets and pails on their heads. We have a Belgian boy with us in camp. He has had most of his back torn off with a bomb in an air raid, though he is well now, I don't see how he ever lived. Winter is fast coming on and gets very cold at times. It is raining very hard and the mud is deep. Don't believe too many wild stories they are telling of us and don't worry until you know they are true. With regards to all will close for this time and will write in a few days,

Yours as ever,

GLENN.

Somewhere in France,

November 1, 1917.

Dear Bernice:

I was indeed a little surprised and very pleasantly surprised, too, to receive your letter. News from friends are very welcome and appreciated by us boys so many miles from home.

I wish I could tell you where I have been, what I have seen and what I am doing, but as you probably know the censorship is very strict and we are not allowed to tell very much. We had a splendid trip across the continent. At every town we passed, we were wildly cheered and several times a day we detrained for exercise. The long ocean voyage was also very pleasant, although, sorry to say, there was no excitement, except in a few cases when strange ships were sighted. We were all very glad when we saw the long-looked-for sight of land once again. The bleak western coast of England looked pretty good to us then.

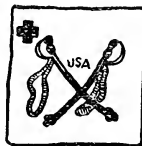
Our stay in England was confined to intermittent travels, long marches and over-night stops at rest-camps. The trip across the channel was extremely rough, but our trip through France to where we are now was very interesting. I have been here two months and am having a wonderful time. We are not allowed to tell what we are doing, but suffice it to say that we are *working*. The climate so far has been very mild with frequent rains. It is too bad you could not come over with the Red Cross. A number of nurses landed here a couple of weeks ago. I am stationed along the shore of a river, several miles from a large port, and many large boats pass here every day. Occasionally a boat from the U. S. flying the Stars and Stripes comes steaming past and how we on shore cheer and yell as she passes us! It is a thrilling Old Glory waving aloft in the air, especially to us, marooned on a foreign soil.

The people here are extremely courteous and hospitable. The chief drawback is our inability to speak French. I am studying very zealously though and am making a little progress. I have not received the magazines yet, but am patiently awaiting them. Thank you very much for your thoughtfulness in sending them.

Will be glad to hear from you again. Best regards to all, from your far-off-friend,

CAROL.

Private Caroll Ten Eyck, Co. F, 18th Engineers, Railway.



*Mrs. E. Skelly, 135 Killingsworth avenue, received the following from her son, Private A. W. Skelly, Co. F, 18th Regiment Engineers, Railway:*

Somewhere in France.

Dear Mother and All the Folks:

Received letters from you last Saturday. Would love to tell you all about our trip and what we are doing but cannot, however, I will be able to tell you all when I get home. You know I never will forget any part of it. We are in a place where there is lots of fruit, a fine climate and have fine treatment from the people. We have a French teacher here enlisted in our company, who is always willing to help the boys out. We are not compelled to learn French. The good old U. S. is plenty good enough and large enough for me to travel and live in. I never will have any desire to leave there again. We have an American daily. It is never over a day late, while there is not much of a story about things going on in the States, there is generally a few lines. Suppose by this time, you have received the allotment I am sending home. Have also invested in a Liberty Bond. About the soldiers' insurance, we have not yet had full details, but if it is what rumor has it I shall invest heavy. As for taking out Liberty Bonds, Company F has a good record. Well, there is a football game that I want to take in. You know Company F holds a record on football also, so I will close for this time,

Love to you and all, yours,

ARCHIE.



*Mrs. M. Anderson, 686 Minnesota avenue, received the following from her son, Wayne J. Anderson, Co. F, 18th Engineers, Railway:*

In France.

Dear Mother:

I received a letter again from you and you cannot imagine how glad I am to get your letters from home. It's like a holiday when mail comes in. I got the socks you made and sent me. I cannot tell you how pleased I was to get them. Yesterday I got all kinds of mail and received a mysterious package from some Portland club-woman. It had in it a whole lot of small articles, such as soap, cigarettes and handkerchiefs and other small articles. We all thank the Oregon people for their kindness. They are certainly doing their best for their country. If they could really know how glad it makes us boys to get things like that.

We have been having rainy weather here. It certainly rains here when it rains and the mud is muddier than any Oregon mud. You folks at home do not need to worry over my health. You would be surprised to see how I have picked up in weight since I left America. No wonder at all, the way my appetite coaxes me here, as long as you folks at the end feed us, then we here will do the rest. The folks here are very kind and I will have a lot to tell you, but the country for me is the U. S. A. This letter is like the war, don't know when to end, but I hope it's very close. Best regards to all. Au revoir and health to you, your son,

WAYNE J. ANDERSON.

*Private Jack D. Wigger, Co. F, 18th Engineers, Railway,  
writes to his mother, Mrs. W. H. Wigger, 431 Williams  
avenue:*

Somewhere in France,

September, 1917.

Dear Folks:

I received your letter and am sorry to hear that you have not received any of my letters. I have answered all I received. It takes some time for the mail to go. I intended to send a cable as it takes so long to write. I suppose the papers have a short sketch telling of our safe arrival. I am doing fine. The climate is good; sunshine most every day. We are right in the fruit section. There are acres and acres of grapes, apples, figs, peaches and pears. Wine is the main drink for the French. You can see them carrying bottles to work and when you see a native at lunch he always has a bottle of wine. Money goes mighty fast. One can break a five-spot and it is gone before you realize it. The only thing I miss is my tobacco. Hope you will send me some. I have some appetite, can eat all the time. They feed us very good, always plenty. I have seen some queer things. The bread, for instance, is about one yard long and six inches thick, just fits under the arm nicely. It costs about as much as two loaves at home. The first time one goes shopping, they have an awful time to find what they want. I never believed I would be a foreigner, but know I am one now and can sympathize with those that arrive in our country. It looks comical to see an American going down the street with one of the fair dames, trying to make her understand. We Americans have a book translating their language. I have one and when I go to a restaurant and can't make them understand I just haul out my little book

and point to the sentences, giving my order. They make fine coffee here. One does not see many wooden buildings. I am paying strict attention to the kind of derricks and bridges they have here. It is wonderful to see the stone arches and how perfect they are and the way they are put together. I have seen docks that would make Portland some city. The locomotives are no where near as large as at home but they all look good to me. They have many things that are copied after ours, but as usual everything is so different.

I have seen wonderful cathedrals. We don't see very much candy or cake, pastry is high and that is made of rice flour. It is almost like candy. A cup of coffee and a small cake about the size of a dollar costs me 50 cents. For one dollar we can get a fair meal. This morning I received a registered letter from you. I couldn't imagine what was inside. I opened it and out rolled an American bill. I let all the boys have a good look at it. I believe it is the only one in my squad. They had to turn it over and over to see if it was real or counterfeit. I wish to thank you for your kindness but don't feel a bit older. I am going to keep the bill as I have my pocket full of the money they use here. Have to take it out and count it every little while to see if I have lost any. It won't be long until Uncle will give us more. The Captain informed us that we will not have to stamp our mail as soldiers' letters go free to the U. S. so you do not have to send me stamps. I wanted to buy a pair of rubbers but find that my feet have grown so that I couldn't get a fit. The army shoes are much wider than they are here. Give my regards to all inquiring friends and tell them to write, as letters are always welcome. Will close with love to all,

PRIVATE JACK D. WIGGEN.

*Mrs. M. E. Sturdevant, 493 East 13th street, received from her son, Robert B. Sturdevant, with Radio Dept., U. S. S. Pueblo; also her son's friend, O. K. Bullard, on U. S. S. Cruiser Sioux, the following letters:*

### LETTER NO. 1

U. S. S. Pueblo, March, 1917.

Dear Mother:

We got under way about six o'clock Wednesday evening. We took on about seven hundred tons of coal and then left right away. It was foggy in the harbor and outside the Gate. We very nearly run a small freighter down. The boat whistled to pass on our port side and then on our starboard side and then it cut across our bow, we had to go full speed astern in order to keep from running it down. It was kind of exciting for a few moments. We would have cut the boat in two.

It was foggy until about two o'clock that night. We are now in the Santa Barbara channel. It has been a fine trip. The sea is calm and there is just enough breeze to carry the smoke away. When the wind is off shore we can smell trees and plants. It sure smells good. The mountains are not as pretty as they are in Oregon and Washington, but they look fine any way.

We will arrive in San Diego about seven o'clock this morning. We will then take on about four hundred tons of coal and some stores and leave for Mexico or near the Canal.

April, 1917.

I am about half way up the Gulf of California at a little place called San Rosilin. It is a small mining town. We were not allowed any liberty, of course. We came up here from La Paz, a small town near the end of Lower California.

We went swimming at La Paz. It was great. The water was cold, but not too cold. After we came out some of the fellows saw a shark.

This Mexican coast is sure a barren place. All you can see is cactus and sand hills. There are some very pretty mountains down here, they are rugged looking, but have no trees on them. The sky-line is pretty, especially in the evening when the sun is setting.

It is warm down here. We wear whites during the day, but change to blues at night. We scrub a suit of whites every evening. I am getting to be a regular shark at washing clothes.

I saw a mirage this morning. It was the first one I had ever seen. It was a long distance away. I think it was a small rock that kept changing shape. It looked like a big gun and then a house and a big tank and a number of different shapes.

This gulf gets pretty rough sometimes. This old ship rolls like everything, but I have felt fine as far as seasickness goes.

We are going to Guaymas tomorrow, and then down south again.

May, 1917.

We have been in Mexican waters for the past month. I like it down south pretty well. It gets rather warm during the day, but we always go swimming about four o'clock, so it isn't so bad.

The air down here is very clear. We were not far enough south to see the Southern Cross. Some days a person can see across the Gulf at Guaymas, which is about eighty-five miles. Some of the fellows said that one can see the mountains across the Gulf at La Paz, that is about one hundred and thirty-five miles. Every day we can see mirages. They are very queer, I think. I didn't have any shore liberty, so I can't tell much about the town. We

could buy oranges and post cards from peddlers that came alongside.

We started from Guaymas at noon Saturday, arriving at La Paz Sunday morning.

We started for the States that same afternoon. We got as far as Cerros Island, where the Brutus, a collier, went on the beach.

We received four hundred men from the Frederick, making our company one thousand and eleven. This ship is certainly crowded. The men that came on are recruits and a few naval militia.

We arrived in San Diego this afternoon, at five o'clock. We are going to coal ship tomorrow, taking on one thousand tons. We are then going to leave for Balboa and through the Canal to the east coast. They need this type of ship over there.

We started through the Canal the 26th of May. It took us about seven hours to go through. We coaled ship at Colon. We took on about twenty-one hundred tons. Colon doesn't seem to be much of a place. The prices are very high.

We left Tuesday for Bahia, Brazil. The trip so far is fine. We are about three hundred miles south of the equator. I was initiated into the Royal Order of Neptuneus Rex. I suppose you know that for years it has been a custom to initiate all land-lubbers when they cross the line. I can assure you I sure did get initiated. I will get a ticket, that shows that I have been across the line. I am a regular sea-going sailor now.

I haven't any idea where we are going when we leave Bahia. We might go around the Horn. I hope that we will get back to the good old U. S. A. soon. These Spanish cities don't compare with American cities.

We are issued a half a bucket of fresh water in the morning to take a bath in, and then another half bucket some time in the afternoon. There are over a thousand men on board and you can imagine how crowded we are.

Bahia seems to be a pretty city from a distance, but from what I have heard the streets are worse than in Panama.

The money is called reis, pronounced rays. A car ride costs nine hundred reis or about ten cents in our money, a meal three thousand reis or about seventy-five cents.

The people are very queer. They are willing to sell their children for a few cents.

There are twelve Americans in the whole city and about fifty thousand Germans. There are two Austrian ships interned in the harbor.

We left Tuesday for patrol duty. It is rough. We are steaming at sixteen knots for Rio Janeiro. I think we will stay in Rio Janeiro for a few days or a least until the \_\_\_\_\_ can catch up with us and give us some supplies. We are out of canned milk and candy and all sorts of supplies. We are going to get a case of canned milk so we fellows in the radio room can have it with our java at night. We have a little electric toaster now so we can have our hot java and toast on our night watches. It is almost worth one's life to try to get java at night. The decks are dark and when we go to the galley to get coffee we stumble over ammunition hatches and everything else.

When we were on our way from Colon to Bahia we passed a ship at night that turned out to be a German raider. We didn't fire.

June, 1917.

We arrived in Rio Janeiro Friday at 3:00 P. M. It is a very pretty city from the harbor. As you come in there is the Sugar Loaf on one side and a fort on the other side. The Sugar Loaf is 1295 feet high. It looks very much like a loaf of sugar. There is an aerial tramway to the top. It is some trip. It costs four thousand reis or about \$1.10 a round trip. It is worth it. One gets a fine view of Rio

from the Sugar Loaf. There are a number of forts around here. They all saluted us when we came in. The Brazilian ship escorted us in. It must have been a pretty sight from the Sugar Loaf to see us all steam in the harbor.

We were granted liberty Saturday. I went ashore and had a fine time. Every one speaks French and Portuguese. The people are very polite and they treat us fine. Some of the people speak English. It sounds great to hear some one speak English.

We get an automobile and have a good ride. One can see so much more than by walking. It costs ten mil-reis an hour or \$2.75.

The food is very good. They serve coffee in very small cups. It is, of course, served black. One may have cognac with their coffee if they wish.

The streets here are wide and are kept clean. The main street, or Avenida Central, is a fine street. It is something like a Paris street. The people move very slowly. The stores don't open until noon.

The houses are all built of granite, and have large court yards. The people seem to like flowers as every house has a large flower garden. The houses are all fenced in with high iron fences.

I met a fellow who told me a great deal about the people and the country. He said that these people are helpless. They don't seem to know how to get all there is out of the country. They don't know how to spend money in order to really get the most good out of it. They think of luxuries before necessities. They don't understand we Americans. They think we are queer, too.

There are more pretty girls here than any city I have ever been in.

The little boys smoke cigarettes. No wonder they are thin and nervous after they are men.

I would prefer living in the U. S. A. to any country I have been in.



Since the fleet came in all the boys down here are learning English. They are learning very quickly. When ever a gob stops to talk with some one on the street a whole crowd of men and boys gather around to hear us talk.

July, 1917.

I went ashore with one of the fellows today. He and I took a car ride. We tried to go to the Botanical Gardens, but we passed it without knowing. At the end of the line we walked around awhile. The country around Rio is certainly very beautiful. The roads are fine. When we got back to the main avenue we had a bite to eat. Some black coffee and cake. The coffee here is coffee, now believe me. It is certainly made strong. They put half milk and half coffee if you want it; and then it is strong, but I am growing fond of it that way.

After we ate our lunch we went out to one of the numerous parks and listened to the band.

I am going to give this letter to a fellow who is going back to the States on the first boat that leaves. I hope you will receive it within a month or two.

With lots of love,

BOB.

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## LETTER NO. 2

We left Panama, May 17th and steamed sixteen days to Bahia, Brazil. Other than being very hot until we reached the equator, June 10th, more beautiful weather and calmer seas were never seen. Upon crossing the "Zero Line" a grand celebration was held in honor of Neptune Rex, king of the seas, who that day came aboard our good ships and initiated into the mysteries of his realm all those land-lubbers, officers and men, who never before

had crossed the equator. I will not take time here to describe the party in detail but it will suffice to say that the King and his court were most wonderfully garbed with costumes that only a "gob" could originate. Hula dances, etc., were held on the quarter deck in the morning and the rest of the day was given over to the initiation. Speaking of rough initiations, well we had it. We are now the proud possessors of a large Neptunus Rex certificate which advises all the sharks, polly-wogs, sea-serpents, etc., that we have been duly initiated and that should we fall overboard all courtesies should be accorded us by the dwellers of the sea—we can now consider ourselves, "sea-going" sailors.

On the morning of June 14th we arrived at Bahia, which presented a most beautiful sight to our sea-tired eyes—the green freshness of its tropical vegetation, the tall palms and cocoanut trees extending high above the buildings, and the deep blue of the water in the bay below dotted with numerous white sails. I can well imagine the amazement of the native upon seeing four of Uncle Sam's battle cruisers steam into their bay and up past the cheese-box fort where they came to anchor and fired the national salute of twenty-one guns, which was immediately answered by the fort. Many small bum-boats came alongside, baskets were lowered and we bought oranges, bananas, parrots, monkeys, in fact everything the natives had to offer. Although we were at this port for five days, liberty was given only once. We were very much disappointed with the city. The buildings were old and dilapidated, the streets narrow and filthy. The people were black and badly in need of much bathing. We located one small cafe, where, after much "sign language," we made the waiter understand that we desired to eat. I do not remember what we ordered but he brought us steak and eggs.

We took turns fighting off the flies. Later in the day we hired an automobile and took in the entire place. We found only one really beautiful portion of the city out

along the ocean by the light-house—all the consuls live there. We visited one of the cathedrals. Its interior was most magnificent—we heard that the natives were kept poor supporting these churches. All hands were well pleased when on June 19th we left for Rio de Janeiro arriving there the 22nd. Soon after leaving Bahia the weather became steadily cooler—on the afternoon of our arrival at Rio the uniform was changed to blue. We were escorted into the harbor by a Brazilian dreadnaught and two torpedo boats. We again fired many salutes. An aeroplane circled over our ships and the aviators waved their welcome to us. Many racing shells put out from the various aquatic clubs, and their crews gave us the “once over.”

Rio is reputed to be the most beautiful harbor in the world—it certainly is. We knew that we would never be able to describe it as it really is, so we have all purchased many post cards of this delightful spot. The people of Rio managed to give the sailors a most friendly reception in spite of the fact that there is but little English spoken there—Portuguese being their language. In all the southern ports which we visited, the people regarded us as curiosities. If we stopped a few moments on the street we were immediately surrounded by a large crowd, which stared and stared at us. As in Bahia, the cafes served us steak and eggs. We were able to buy ice cream here, though it was not much like that to which we were accustomed. We took many auto rides about the place. We also went upon the famous Sugar Loaf mountain, from which a wonderful view of the city may be had.

We had the good fortune to meet a young American who was in the employ of a North American rubber company. His explanation of the various customs and conditions of the people was very interesting. It seems that there are only two classes of people throughout Brazil—the very rich—those with government positions; and the very poor—there is no middle class. Instead of shaking

hands as we do, we noted that all the men embraced each other. On July 4th there was a large parade—U. S., Brazilian, French and English sailors taking part. July 6th our squadron left Rio for Montevideo, Uruguay, where they arrived Monday, the 9th. By this time all hands had broken out in their jerseys and watch-caps for it was very cold.

Our reception at Montevideo was certainly *some* reception, as you have already read in the newspapers. The docks were one solid mass of people, all shouting and waving hats, handkerchiefs, etc. The Pueblo and South Dakota had the good fortune to be tied alongside a dock during our stay in this port. Every day, all day long, the crowds paraded these docks, viewing the wonderful North American battle wagons. The sailor boys were taken right into the homes of these people, and every effort was made to show their hospitality. We were treated so kindly that there is not a sailor in the fleet who would not rather be in Montevideo than any other port. We were given liberty every other day. Spanish is spoken here. The people are well dressed, good looking and the weather is cold enough to bring the "roses" into the cheeks of the pretty señoritas. Many entertainments were given us during our stay.

July 23rd we left for Buenos Aires, a hundred miles or so up the Plata River. These South American cities are very jealous of each other, and each one tried to outdo the other in its reception of the North American squadron. We were escorted into Buenos Aires by several Argentine battleships and a whole fleet of torpedo destroyers, as well as hundreds of privately owned yachts and motor boats, all of which were gaily decorated with flags. A large steamer, crowded with Americans and English people, passed close alongside—it sure seemed great to hear greetings in our own tongue. Well, our week's stay at Buenos Aires seems almost like a dream now. Every day, from 8:00 A. M. till 2 A. M., we were given liberty. Every minute of our

time was taken—theatre parties, dinner parties, dances, special car rides, football games, and trips to various points of interest were given us. The people of Buenos Aires did not want us to spend a cent—we had free access to everything, street cars, subways, theatres, etc. You can well imagine that we had *one grand time* in spite of the fact that the weather was cold and it rained most of the time during our visit there.

We left Buenos Aires August 1st. Everyone hoped a stop would be made at Montevideo, but no such luck—we went back to Rio de Janeiro, arriving there August 6th. August 11th we left and patrolled until the 25th. September 14th we again left Rio and went to Bahia, arriving there September 17th. This time we stayed at Bahia until October 7th. Because of the hot weather and the filthy condition of the city we moved upstream and liberty was given on a small island. We had swimming parties every day—the water was great. Several minstrel shows and smokers were given aboard to relieve the monotony. We also had moving pictures every night on the quarter deck. We all thought we would be at Bahia for about three months, so most every one of us, officers included, had his head shaved, just to have something to do—you can imagine our regret for this act when on the 7th of October we sailed for Rio, where we stayed till October 14th and again arrived at Montevideo October 18th—believe me, all hands were certainly pleased, in spite of the fact that their hair was a la convict. The Pueblo and South Dakota again had the good fortune to tie up to the dock, and we renewed former acquaintances among the Montevideans. The Americanos certainly have won a spot in the hearts of these people.

Very truly yours,

ORLEM K. BULLARD,

U. S. S. Sioux.

*Mr. Ira P. Reynolds, with J. L. Hartman, Chamber of Commerce, received the following letter from Stanley Boquist, Co. A, 10th Engineers, American Expeditionary Forces:*

Somewhere in France, November 5, 1917.

Dear Friend Ira:

Have been intending to write you for some time but accommodations for writing are not very good, also we have just gotten located in \_\_\_\_\_. Have seen quite a little of France so far and everything has been very interesting but for all that I wish that I was back in the good old U. S. Believe me there's no place like it. The food here is really better than I had expected, though the sending of it is rather inconvenient. We are living in tents with eight to a tent. We are quite a long way from any large cities but are five or six miles from a number of small towns. They are old and the people are very old-fashioned. All the peasants wear wooden shoes and their clothes look a great deal like those worn by the colonials. About every other house or hut is a tavern. From the number of French boys we see drinking and smoking cigarettes, believe that as soon as they are weaned, they are put on wine and cigarettes.

Would like to drop in the office and see all the old familiar faces again. I certainly will be glad when I get back to my old job again and come and go at my leisure as I used to do.

The climate in this part of France in which we are at present located is just like Portland. The customs, homes and farms around here are just about 100 years behind the U. S.

Had a nice trip over the Atlantic. Wish I could tell you about our travels, but we are not permitted to tell where we are, what we have seen or where we have been. One of the fellows remarked on board ship when we were four

or five days out from landing port, "We are out of the danger zone." Another answered, "Is that so?" and the reply was, "Yes, we are in the death zone now."

Tell the folks in the office that reading is scarce over here and that I wish some of them would write. I can't write very often because we are not allowed to write as many letters as we would like on account of the time it takes the officers to censor them. Give my regards to everyone in the office. Hoping yourself and family are enjoying the best of health, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

STANLEY BOQUIST.



*Mr. and Mrs. D. L. Bates, of Milwaukie, Ore., received from their son the following interesting letter:*

December 3, 1917.

Dear Mother and Father:

To begin with the South American cruise, we left the Bremerton Navy Yard, Puget Sound, Washington, April the 12th and arrived at Frisco two days later, where we put in a few repairs at Mare Island Navy Yard and took on 101 new regular recruits from the training station.

April the 30th we left San Francisco and arrived at San Diego May the 2nd. The purpose here was for the mobilization of the South American Squadron. The other vessels were of our type, but will not reveal the names of the ships for military secrecy reasons.

At San Jose, Guatemala, the landing force was at all times standing by to go ashore and quell a German uprising. We have been trained to use small arms as well as heavy guns you know but we did not know anything about field battle. I don't know how well the Germans are organized but from what I hear they had a pretty good force there. However, nothing ever came of it, so after four days we proceeded to Panama, arriving at Balboa, C. Z., the 20th day of May.

We spent five days in dry dock and in the meantime the men were allowed shore liberty. We took a small pay-as-you-enter car to Panama City, fare 10c.

The money of the Republic of Panama has just one-half the valuation of our money. U. S. money is known as gold money and Panaman money is known as silver money. These terms apply also to the race, the white people, gold, and the colored people, the silver. This way of distinguishing classes and money first originated when the building of the canal was in its early stages; the white people of the United States desired their pay in U. S. coinage, while the



colored people of the West Indies wanted their pay in their money.

The main thoroughfare of Panama City is Central Avenue, which is the narrowest street I've ever seen. When a vehicle came along we had to get inside of a building or off the street to let it pass. There are a great many old ruins, one in particular I remember, a fort shelled by Morgan, the English buccaneer in the 17th century. Some of the modern buildings are the Panama Railroad Depot, the Government Palace and the Hotel Ancon.

The healthful conditions here are, however, very good, due to the influence of the U. S.

Balboa is the true American city there. The mosquitoes have been eradicated and the air is very refreshing. One of the features of Balboa is that the business and the buying and selling of supplies is controlled by the Government Commissary of the U. S.

The trip through the Canal was an interesting one, needless to say. The first sights we saw was the ruins of the old French attempt to build a canal. We went through three sets of locks, the first was the Miraflores, which consisted of two locks as did Pedro Miguel. After passing through Gatun Lake we descended to Limon Bay through the Gatun Locks (three locks). Gatun Lake is an artificial lake, the water being furnished by the Chagres River. Colon was then reached in about forty minutes.

Colon, like Panama City, is dirty. The streets of Colon are straight and it is more of a seaport than Panama City. Each city has about 5000 white people and 30,000 of the black race.

We left Colon on May 29th for Brazil. The only thing of any consequence that happened on the way was the crossing of the equator on June 10th. All of those men who had previously crossed it, which were about 20 men out of the total ship's company of 900 men, got together and organized a Neptune party to put the rest of us through the awful (?) tortures of the sea in order that we should

become trusty shellbacks and followers of Neptune Rex, King of the Deep. At any rate, no one was seriously hurt, but we had a hard time cleaning vaseline out of our hair and other such things. This initiation was just about the same as a fraternity initiation, only not quite so bad. So everybody who crossed the equator regards it as an event of a lifetime. Each man gets a diploma for it, showing we are no longer landlubbers but trusty shellbacks.

After a run of 15 days we arrived in the harbor of Bahia, Brazil, also known as San Salvador. This city looks good from the harbor—but is the dirtiest place I ever did see. To get up in the main part of the city we had to take either an elevator or an incline railway.

The Brazilian coinage is known as reis and milreis. It takes 1000 reis to make a milreis and 3 milreis, 500 reis (3\$500, the way it is written) is worth \$1.00 of our money.

The language spoken in Brazil is Portuguese, whereas the rest of the Latin-American countries speak mostly the pure Castillian Spanish, the best Spanish.

Outside of the fact that Bahia was the former capital of Brazil, no interest there. The people are mostly black and the buildings are not substantially built. After a stay of six days in this hole, we left for Rio de Janeiro, the capital of Brazil. Rio has a population of 1,000,000 people and is the second city in size of South America and 15th in the world. It is beautifully situated on The Guanabara, also known as the Bay of Rio. The bay is 18 miles long and 12 miles wide and is studded by many small islands and enclosed by projections, peaks and pinnacles.

The main avenue is the Avenidas Rio Branco, which is exactly  $7\frac{1}{2}$  miles long. It was formerly known as the Avenidas Central. In 1904, 590 buildings were demolished to widen the street and form the present Avenidas Rio Branco. Like the streets of Paris, they are fashionable. The cafe proprietors put their tables out on the edge of the wide sidewalks for their patrons.

The buildings are anything but uniform. Some of the most important are the Jornal do Commercio (Journal of Commerce), Jornal do Brasil (Journal of Brazil). Some others are: O Paiz (National Library), Naval, Military and Central Clubs, Jockey Club, Monroe Palace (named in honor of James Monroe), Municipal Theatre, where Caruso and others play, and the Hotel Avenida.

The Avenida Biera Mar begins at the south end of Rio Branco. It is four miles long and runs along the bay. Along it are wide walks and well-kept gardens. The streets are all illuminated by electricity.

In the harbor at the same time were the French cruiser, \_\_\_\_\_, His Majesty's ships, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (British), also a large part of the Brazilian dreadnoughts and destroyers.

On July 4, the men from all of these ships paraded through the streets of Rio. This was the largest parade of its kind ever seen here. In the line of march in their order were the American Sailors and Marines, the Brazilian Sailors and Marines, followed by the French and British. The march was about eight miles and by the time we were all back, it was a pretty tired bunch of men. Two days later we pulled up anchor and sailed for Montevideo, Uruguay.

Montevideo gave us the warmest welcome we received on our cruise. At this place we tied up at one of the big concrete docks. As we pulled in thousands of people stood there, waving hats and handkerchiefs. The money valuation is 4 cents higher on the dollar than ours—that is, we had to give them \$1.04 for one Uruguayan Peso. It is the one foreign place where money is worth more than ours. Their smaller coinage is known as centisemos. Money is coined 1 centisemos, 2 centisemos, 10 centisemos, 20 centisemos, 50 centisemos and 1 peso (100 centisemos).

Montevideo has about 370,000 people. It is not as beautiful a city as Rio de Janeiro, but the people are far better off intellectually and financially.

There are a great number of parks and suburban districts of interest in Montevideo. Some of the buildings of interest are the Solis Theatre, National University, which consists of colleges of law, medicine, pharmacy, agriculture and engineering; another building of interest is the railroad station. The types of locomotives and rolling stock are the same as the European type.

Uruguayans are fond of athletics, soccer football is their national sport along with horse racing. During our stay, the fleet played three games. We played two games with other two ships, both ended in 0 to 0 games. Four Portland men were on the team: Harry Brubaken and Tom Gorman, ex-W. H. S. men, Clarence C. Wright, ex-L. H. S. man and myself. The Uruguayans evidently thought it was a circus, every time a man would fall on the ball or tackle another man they would laugh. Two other teams played and it ended 61 to 6 in favor of the U. S. S.

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After a stay of thirteen days, the four ships steamed, ploughed and wallered up the Rio de la Platta River, going to Buenos Aires. The river was really too shallow for a ship of our tonnage so we slid over the bottom. At night we anchored and waited till the next morning before proceeding to Buenos Aires. We arrived in Buenos Aires about 6 P. M. the following day.

Our welcome there was mostly by the British, American and Italian people. The British has a large population in Buenos Aires.

Their money has not quite one-half the valuation of ours. Their peso is worth about 40 cents American money. Other pieces of coinage are five centavos and twenty centavos.

The electric railways of Buenos Aires are controlled by British interests and the result was that we were given free transportation to any place. The most popular ride was the subway, which ran under the Avenida de Mayo (Avenue of May).

Buenos Aires is by far the best city in South America. It has 1,320,000 people (1910 census) and is the finest city in size in South America or 11th in size of the world's cities. It is the New York of South America. Due to the large British population we were shown a wonderful time. Theatre parties and street-car rides were arranged daily for us by these hospitable people. After a seven-day stay we left Buenos Aires to take up another duty which I cannot tell here.

Lovingly your son,

(Signed) REESE,

U. S. S. Dakota, New York.

National Naval Volunteer.



*Lieut. Gorben L. Goodell, of 924 Bryce Avenue, in the Field Artillery Training School in France, writes:*

That an old-fashioned dinner of turkey and pumpkin pie was served at the University Club in Paris on Thanksgiving Day. All those American officers who could go into Paris for that day were present. General Pershing, General Joffre, and General Viviani attended the celebration and during the repast each one gave very stirring talks to the men.

The University Club, or American Union, was opened in Paris during October, under the direction of Van Rensselaer Lansingh, of New York. He is a graduate of Boston "Tech." and was sent to France in the beginning of war by the alumni of Boston "Tech." to establish a club for the graduates of that university. Mr. Lansingh found such a big field for that work that his commission was changed to the larger one of forming in Paris a University Club for all universities. The first club was opened on 8 Rue de Richelieu and met with such tremendous success that new quarters have had to be added throughout the city to accommodate the membership. Mr. Lansingh's work was first supposed to be finished by December, 1917, but his employers have persuaded him to remain in France until summer. The club is a boon to the American officers so far away from home, for there they find American customs and make friends, for, of course, every furlough is spent in Paris. Those who are stationed in training camps near Paris have this comforting place to look forward to every week-end after the endless grind of the daily work.

*Mr. T. J. Conway, 805 Minnesota avenue, received the following letter from his cousin, Lieut. B. J. Gallagher, M. O. R. C., U. S. Army:*

November 27, 1917, 9 P. M.

Dear Frank:

Have sent a few cards and written home once or twice since coming to France a few days ago and no doubt you have seen some of the correspondence by this time. Of course I cannot tell you just where I am but think I can describe a few things of interest without in any way violating censorship restrictions. To attempt to describe the condition of the country which has been devastated by actual warfare is almost a hopeless task of course, for one must see to believe and my experience so far has been quite limited. But I have had a look and the destruction is certainly complete. I am with a Field Ambulance Company attached to a British Division, and we have our headquarters in what was apparently a beautiful French city of several thousand people. It was never actually in German possession but their line at one time came within a couple of miles of the town and consequently within shelling distance. Practically every building in town, including the very large cathedral, and bishop's palace, is in ruins more complete than one can imagine. Nothing left, in many cases but fragments of walls and the town completely deserted, of course by civilians. How many women and children were killed by those collapsing walls in the early days of the bombardment no one on earth knows.

As I write tonight, and in fact, during every waking hour, I can hear the boom of the big guns a few miles away. Yesterday I made a trip to the trenches to see what it was like and from the dug-out of a Brigadier General looked out across No-Man's Land to the Boche trenches

a few hundred yards away. It was a beautiful sunny day and overhead a couple of British aeroplanes were scouting around over the German lines and the German anti-aircraft guns were peppering away at them but always missing.

We passed through trenches and dug-outs which had formerly been occupied by the Huns but which are now in the possession and use of the British. No use to try to describe things of that kind because I couldn't anyway and some day hope to be able to tell you more than one can write.

Don't get the impression that I am in a very dangerous position because, according to the law of averages, that can hardly be said to be the case and comparatively speaking I am in a very safe position.

Have never gotten the cigars you were sending but probably will later if you have sent them.

A good many of the boys who were on the boat over from the States with me and then scattered throughout the military hospitals in England were together again on the trip across the Channel. It seemed as if a fellow knew some of those boys all his life, though we all met for the first time in Washington in August.

I have about everything I need and can easily procure anything necessary in the way of clothing, etc., from the army supply depot here, so the folks at home need not worry that I am suffering for want of anything. Just the opposite is the case—I have more junk than I can carry around or find place for. In fact, things are quite comfortable and I'm sure a lot of people at home are not as comfortably located as I am—though we have no grand pianos or steam heat.

Send mail in care of Col. Lyster at London as before. It will be the quickest and safest way in the long run.

Am learning a great deal about army life, camp sanitation, etc., and in general enjoying myself very much. If I



only knew that the folks at home wouldn't worry and always imagine that something was happening to me, I would be quite happy.

It will probably be nearly Christmas when you get this letter so I'll wish you all a Merry Christmas and hope that we may spend the next one together in the good old U. S. A.

Lovingly,

BEN.



*Mr. Charles B. Pye, Chamber of Commerce, received the following most interesting letters from his friend, Charles R. Parrott:*

## LETTER NO. 1

France, November 20, 1917.

Dear Friend Pye:

The last time I wrote you, I was in the "pink" of condition and I believe it was the night, or two nights before we went into the hardest fight of my experience. It fell to our lot to take the crest and a portion of the other side of the Passchandaele Ridge. Well! we took it and hold it still but, of course, that goes without saying! Of all the campaigning experiences I have had, that one will be forever uppermost in my memory. I'll try and relate to you the affair from the start, until the time I got my "knock out". We waded into the front line, about seven miles, through mud and mire, blood and water, sometimes going up to the neck and at other times hanging on in strings to our rifles to help pull one another along. The load! We each had two hundred rounds of ammunition, two smoke bombs, six rifle grenades, ten bombs, two water bottles, two ground signals, two other heavy signals, a shovel, our ration for forty-eight hours and a lot of miscellaneous things that go to make a modern soldier a perfect walking armory. Of course, it rained (as is the only weather we have in Belgium). Fritz shelled us unmercifully all the way in and our casualties were somewhat heavy! However, we got in and believe me, if ever men held out for thirty-six hours, under one of the heaviest bombardments in the history of the war, it was us—for he simply turned onto us what he calls "annihilating" fire. We were buried and buried again and again. It seemed

he had all the world's artillery set at us. Our trench was smashed to atoms; and alas! many of our boys, too. We simply lay in the earth with our faces buried in the ground, waiting for that thirty-six hours to pass over. Each minute we expected the end. The signal came at 6:05 A. M. and believe me the whole line jumped up and away we went. Even though it had meant death, I was never so glad to "jump the boys" in any attack before. We stumbled forward, we rolled and crawled and what I remember, the boys were singing and howling. I guess it was a relief to get away from that waiting for it. The bombers, the section under my charge, I never saw. Soon after the start I suddenly seemed to go sky high, my rifle smashed and all my equipment blown off me. I pulled myself together and kept dangling forward till I reached our objective, when I was told that I was wounded. It was rather amusing, for I hadn't got a thing to defend or fight with, except the shovel.

Two of the boys dressed my thigh and before I got too weak or too stiff, I commenced the longest and most agonizing crawl of my life. I had to keep moving, or sink and I crawled clear to Ypres and then remembered no more until I was in a hospital wagon. Our wounded were getting sniped cruelly by the Boche and at times one almost despaired of getting out at all! However, when one fully realizes that determination is the only salvation, it's simply surprising where the strength comes from. Of course, you can't understand the situation up there until you can realize that the greatest military feat has been accomplished through, what seems impassable mud. Try to understand that if a man is very badly wounded, he is worse off than dead, for his chances of ever getting out are so very remote. It's a regular "quick-sand mud" and one's disappearance to the underground is rapid. There is one redeeming feature about the mud up there, it stops the flight of lots of shrapnel from his "heavies". I can't understand yet, the readiness of the Boche to lose such positions. His

men (with very few exceptions) will not face us. They have positions that, if held to, are absolutely impossible to take. His "pill boxes" are absolutely safe from any shell (the only things I've seen to withstand our heavies). It's no use, Heinie will not put up a fight against us, he's literally scared and with very few exceptions his hands go up before we get at 'em. Now, I'm not saying they're all like that, but the very, very great majority. There was some good bayonet work with our boys that morning. It was the only thing to use, as our rifles were like sticks of mud and slime.

Well, I can't write much more now for my wound is troublesome, although not serious. It tore a piece out of my thigh, but my flesh is apparently clean and healthy and I think it will soon heal. The rest, I can assure you, I'll appreciate, for I'm in a large hospital and above all, I'm between sheets and I'm *clean*! It's the first time my clothes have been off for fifteen months (except, of course, for a change).

I guess the Italian fiasco has upset you. It has me—for it's both discouraging for us and only prolongs the end of this Hellishness. To me, there seems no end in sight, for with every reverse, I believe the attitude of the Allies will be more determined and, of course, on the other hand, the confidence of the Entente more optimistic.

Write me soon and address my mail as before as it will be forwarded to me.

Best wishes to yourself and please remember me to all friends. Tell Miss Anderson those handkerchiefs just match the white sheets.

(Signed) CHARLES R. PARROTT.

## LETTER NO. 2

1st Southern General Hospital Ward C-3,  
Stourbridge, Worcester, England, Dec. 9, 1917.

Dear Friend Pye:

I know only too well that you will appreciate another letter from me. That's really the whole joy of writing, it seems to me, when one's letters are looked forward to. It's giving someone else pleasure I suppose that really causes the incentive to write. Well, I've been in the above hospital for two weeks now and I had three weeks in a hospital at Le Treport, France. The hospital in France was a huge hotel in pre-war days, a most luxurious place, right on the cliffs. One could look through the windows and see for miles across the channel, but always with his mind on England, or for me, dear old Portland! Well, the time came to be moved to England and then began the most inspiring and touching memories of my war experiences. The wounded forget their pain, the limbless forget their loss, the blind forget their terrible affliction and the gassed forget their inevitable doom and from those great strong faces one sees the tears run as the boat reaches England. I tried to study it out, man, as I limped about the deck with my two sticks and the only conclusion I could come to was, that we were *going home*, going back to the land for which the lads had fought. The realization of actually returning with life. One hears it said so very often in life, "There's no place like home!"—maybe it's said too casually, but it's the first and only time I've ever seen the actual joy, the joy that moves a soldier to tears. There wasn't a smile, there wasn't a cheer from the men—but the joy was demonstrated with tears of gratitude—thanks for the life that was spared them and who knows, possibly the realization that they had fought their fight for their

dear old country and "done their bit." Strange and most realistic thoughts pass through one's mind. One sees it in France, one actually sees it in Germany. One sees it now practically the world over—and soon, old friend, you good people will be brought to face it, too.

As soon as the ship was docked, we were most delicately and carefully handled and with a system that runs so smooth, that one actually thinks he's in heaven, we are placed in the huge hospital trains. Such comfort is almost bewildering, after France. Good, delicate meals are served around and then as the trains pass through the country, one sees gratitude. 'Twas there that my tears were shed. As the train rushes along, the people cheer and cheer. One wonders, is it possible for this spirit to remain so stanch and so fervent after almost four years of war. Four years of sacrifice unknown before.

We reached Stourbridge about midnight and it seemed the whole country-side was out to cheer us. On the station were (ever to the fore) the backbone of this war, the Red Cross women. They work like Trojans, giving and thinking of nothing else but the comfort of the men. Then waiting outside are all the private automobiles of the country and after hot coffee, and fruit, etc., on the station we were carefully (always very carefully) driven to the hospital. The system of the whole thing is a revelation to me. Every branch of the Red Cross, it seems, is disciplined to a wonderful state of efficiency. As one passes his time away in a hospital, the picture comes to his mind of what women are to war. You know a soldier is in the line so long that he thinks he's the "only thing". He gets rough, uncouth, and more like a savage. He forgets there's others so far, maybe, behind. Of course, it's most natural, I suppose. When up there, man, women are not of your life. There's nothing gentle, there's nothing but the savage and the ravage of war. But these women—the way they work, the sacrifice they make! Surely, surely, if a man loses his life in the line, these good women give

theirs equally as courageously and devotedly for us. It matters not whether they are ladies of title, or princesses, they start at the bottom to learn their profession of nursing. They scrub floors, they make beds, they do the most menial kind of work. It's their life work now, it seems, for after three and a half years of war, it remains no novelty. Their hours are long and the discipline strict. Their ordinary pleasure now is in their work and it shows itself in the way they so cheerfully and so very tenderly do their work. For myself, there will always be two parts in war and both parts are equally essential and both call for equal sacrifice. I'm afraid the Red Cross will come first, always; and now, believe me, if you before never thought the work of Florence Nightingale, Utopian and glorious, you may think so now.

Well, I guess my enthusiasm and my gratitude for the Red Cross has carried me far enough. It will be never forgotten if I am spared to come through, old man—and if I die over there, well, yes, the women of Britain alone are worth the sacrifice, leave alone the principle. We get some splendid concerts in the hospital. The best operatic stars travel around. Their work is great. I've never listened to finer music than in the hospital. I've paid big money for worse. Then the various societies and schools give excellent concerts and there's hardly a night goes by without something good for the "boys". Yes, these people are good, they're the very essence of goodness.

The hospitals are full, terribly full, all over the British Isles. This is a huge place and it used to be a poor-house before the war. We have quite a lot of American doctors here and the doctor that attends me comes from California, the University at Berkeley. He and I got to be fast friends, as for a long time I was at Berkeley. I am the only Canadian in this ward. The man alongside of me is an Australian. He told me some wonderful stories of the work of the Germans in Australia. The preparations the Germans made in Australia to fight against the Empire

were simply alarming. The amount of field artillery they had smuggled into the country as 'pianos' and the various other stores and plots that were "nipped in the bud". The way the Germans had got into the House of Representatives and the way they had so very cunningly done their work through I. W. Wism, was a revelation to me. It will come out, after the war—and then look out for truths! Apparently the world does not yet know what agonizing times Australia and New Zealand had at the beginning of the war. They intended to make war there deliberately and it appears they had sufficient people there to do it. The lad has many facts and if his word is doubted, he can immediately turn to something that happened in Parliament to prove what he says. Possibly you have read of some of their work there. I have not. Well, they lost out, anyway, just as the dogs will lose out in the main. They are powerful yet, terribly powerful, and will take a lot of beating. Everyone realizes the enormity of the task, but by God, the people seem determined to bring them down, for they seem to realize the great issues at stake. I can tell you, there's very little joy in Britain right now. Everyone is rationed and food is scarce. There's an awful scarcity of sugar and, well, even in the hospital, they seem to put it on the outside of the tea-cups. These are the things, with many, many worse, that the people have got to endure in order to win. I only hope their stolidness and their stanchness holds out. I think it will. We need the American Army, a huge Army, and we do need the Air Service. Remember we fight at a disadvantage, we have to advance over beaten ground, every inch of which the Hun has registered perfectly. It's an uphill fight at a tremendous cost. His spy system behind our lines is still wonderful. It has grown with the people, generated and fostered for years, but we'll get him yet!

Well, I must close, old friend. I'm going along O. K. My wound is healing magnificently and my nerves are steadying daily. Please address your letter, Care Army



P. O. London, England, and I'll get them more direct. Don't send any more papers until I get back to France. My very best wishes to yourself and kind regards to all friends.

Yours most sincerely,

(Signed) CHARLES R. PARROTT.

P. S. I guess I've lost a lot of mail, particularly papers, and I would like a copy of that letter, or letters you had published.—C. R. P.



*Mrs. A. L. Metcalfe, 170 W. Killingsworth avenue, received from her son, Corporal A. F. Metcalfe, the following message:*

France, Nov. 30, 1917.

My Dear Mother:

I received your very dear letter and was so glad to hear from you. Am glad to know that you are all well and hope you will keep so all the time. Received a letter from Aunt Georgia; it was very nice of her to write me. I had also written her a four-page letter, and know she will be surprised when she gets it. You said you were still looking for a second letter; you surely must have received it by this time. I write quite often of late, so it will not be so long between letters. You did not tell me anything about your trip East. I ran across a very nice fellow here in France who used to live near the Turney farm at Gettysburg. His name is Steward. When you write to Aunt Annie ask her if she knows his people. I meet him here about every four weeks. We had our big United States dinner on Thanksgiving Day, and it sure was some feed. We had everything you could think of, even to the drinks. The Frenchmen laugh at us when we drink water, which is very bad, and believe me, a glass of Bull Run is worth more than all the wine in France.

Charlie Jones sent me a big box of candy for Christmas which was very nice of him. He is sure some sport anyway, no matter how you take him. When you are in town I wish you would go in and see him for me and thank him at the same time. I will write him a letter soon. I wish you or the girls would make some fruit cake for me. It would be the only kind you could send. You know you used to tell me when I was a kid, the older fruit cake was the better it was, so you might start one now and it would age some before it reached me. Tell

Dad I am anxious to see his hand writing once more, and ask those brothers and sisters of mine if they are having an attack of cramps in their wrists, the reason I don't hear from them.

Tell Jim that Victor Moore is in my squad and sends his regards to him as he sits beside me writing now. Tell Jim to drop him a line, too.

Well, Mother, this isn't much of a letter, but I will write you a long letter Sunday telling you of my whole trip from the time I left until now. That will give you enough reading matter for a few days.

Wishing you and all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, with love and kisses to you and all,

Yours,

ALLAN.



*Mrs. A. E. Porter, 869 Regent Drive, received the following letter from her son, Private Victor L. Porter:*

In France, Dec. 5, 1917.

Mother Dear:

The goods arrived safely and I was surely happy to receive them. Well, I guess they will come in handy! I like the helmet, socks and wristlets best of all. The first time, as far as I can remember, of your ever having knit anything. I'm getting along first rate and the weather is good.

Received a wonderful letter from Mrs. Fred Baker; she also sent me a fine book entitled, "The Sword of Youth"; am reading it and like it fine. Her letter was written upon paper used during the Boer war, the heading of which contained the picture of her brother, "Lord Roberts," or, as he was otherwise known, "Dear old Bob." I surely appreciated it, for I never dreamed of hearing from her. Also received a nice letter from Clower, and am answering both letters this evening.

Our Thanksgiving dinner was a huge success—a regular old banquet, which lasted three hours. It was a fine meal with everything one could desire from turkey down.

I know, Mother, I should have written you sooner, but when the day is over, after supper, we usually talk awhile, then off to bed, for another day approaches quickly and one needs plenty of rest when they are working hard. Have not written Ad for a week, so you see, if I do not watch out letters to me will soon become scarce, but I will try hard to hold up my end of the correspondence.

Well, Mother, I will stop now and write the rest of the family a line.

Love to all, trusting all keep well,

Your son,

VICTOR.

Dear Brother Arthur:

Your dear letter at hand, also mother's. Time you were becoming active in the art of writing.

I am getting along fine. We are camped by a river where many large boats go up and down. The real large ones, the kind you see in Astoria.

So you have your wheel fixed right up to the minute. No doubt it comes in handy going to and from school.

How is Pat getting along? Is he still as ferocious as ever?

The morning of the 3rd it was quite frosty, so I tried out mother's helmet. It is the clear rig, alright. The sox I will keep for awhile before using, as the ones I have now are plenty warm. The snappy weather never lasts over three days. The air is fine to be out in.

I was surely surprised to hear that Allan Blair was in the game; will keep my eyes open for him. It would be fine to have a talk with him.

Would be glad to hear from mother's sister. If possible, will write her, but my evenings seem to go on the run. Mother need not worry about me. In regard to sending a box, I am happy with anything and not very particular, though you might send me two Prophylactic tooth brushes.

It's fine Dad is sporting out in my neckties. Some one will, no doubt, give him a fine sendoff.

Now, family, do not worry; I am getting along alright; my health is the very best, and I'm doing everything I can to keep it that way.

It is getting late, and I am usually in dreamland at 9 or 9:30 at the latest.

Now all write often and take good care of mother,

Love to all,

Brother,

VICTOR.

*The following letter was received at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. Feldenheimer, at 702 Main Street from their son Roy Feldenheimer who enlisted with the Medical Unit.*

Liverpool, Mersey Hospital,

Myrtle Street.

My Dear Ones:

Would have written to you some five or six days ago, but the bandage on my eye prevented me—too much strain, and the nurses too busy to take my dictation. The first week of our trip on the transport was quite monotonous. We proceeded via Halifax where we picked up half dozen other boats. Weather fair, quarters third class—six to a bunk and that on a Cunard Liner. Typical English rations. Unfortunately through my accident will probably lose my unit. Have heard some remarkable, almost unbelievable stories, while in the hospital, from the boys who returned from the front to be treated for injuries. This is supposed to be as fine a place as there is in England. A private hospital with a swell ward for only twenty soldiers, and I am the first American soldier to receive treatment here. The specialist is surely on the job—a fine man, about fifty years. I saw a piece of shrapnel weighing four ounces which he removed from a fellow's eye and which the X-ray did not reveal. Now that I am about to leave am just beginning to understand the English language as it is spoken over here and the nurses in turn to understand my Yankee talk.

From the looks of things England is really having to conserve food supplies and the war is far from over, and I wager the United States will be compelled to have millions and millions of men in the field before long and it is not going to be easy sailing either. There is no question but that aeroplanes will play an important part,

and added to American ingenuity will help win the war. I wish I could relate some of the stories I have heard, but as each bears its own flavor with either a broad Scotch, Canadian, or Cockney accent, they would be lost in the writing.

Judging by the way the theatres and cafes are patronized, to capacity, one would never dream that we are waging the greatest war in history.

When across the channel hope to have more items of interest.

God bless you all.

As ever, devotedly,

ROY.



*The Inclosed "Masterpiece" was written by a Portland boy to his mother, describing his trip across the pond.*

Aboard the "Kroonland," November 18, 1917.

In days of old a feller  
    Could take an ocean trip,  
And for the pirates of the deep,  
    He'd never give a rip.

But nowadays, by Golly!  
    Things are not the same,  
For the bloody German submarine  
    Infests the bounding main.

Old Noah had his troubles,  
    Upon the good ship "Ark,"  
With monkeys, lions, elephants,  
    But not the "Iron Shark."

We daresn't take a smoke on deck,  
    Or have a bit of fun,  
For fear a light might be perceived  
    By some nasty prowling "Hun."

At night we rest in life belts,  
    Of sleep there's little hope,  
And our days are spent in watching  
    For the illusive periscope.

There's watch upon the boat deck,  
    And gun crews fore and aft,  
And talk of wintry evenings,  
    Upon a blooming raft.

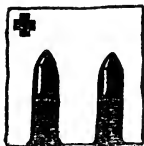


And *if* the darn sea monsters,  
Should miscalculate our route,  
There's always mines and time bombs,  
And other things that shoot.

And when you least expect it,  
There is no speck upon the sea;  
We're hurled a thousand miles or so,  
With a ton of T. N. T.

So now my gentle mother,  
You've gathered from my tone,  
There ain't much fun in cruising  
In the German danger zone.

—H. W. B.



The following poem was recently composed by Dr. Henry Van Dyke and read at a meeting of Princeton students:

### "THE Y. M. C. A. HUTS"

In the camps around our country and in countries far away  
There's a lot of wooden houses that are marked Y. M. C. A.  
And some are painted yellow and some are brown or green;  
Now say, who owns these houses and what do the letters mean?

They mean a bit of comfort and they mean a place to rest  
Where every tired soldier boy is welcome as a guest.  
They mean a bit o' friendly talk, some music, and some jokes,  
And some quiet little corners for writing to your folks.

They mean a bit of human love amid the storm of war,  
They mean the word of healing for spirits wounded sore.  
They mean a simple message from God's own holy word,  
And they mean the thought of the home-land where the sweet  
    old hymns are heard.

You ask who owns these houses? I think you know His name.  
You call Him Saviour, Master, Lord, the meaning's just the  
    same.

'Tis the One who gave Himself for us, the Leader of our life.  
We pray He'll lead and keep our boys, in peril and in strife.

O keep them strong and steady, and keep them clean and true!  
Help them to battle for the right and put the victory through!  
Be Thou their shield and buckler; but if one is struck down,  
O, Captain of Salvation, give him the heavenly crown!

—HENRY VAN DYKE.





God save our splendid men;  
Send them safe home again—  
    God save our men.  
Make them victorious,  
Faithful and chivalrous;  
They are so dear to us—  
    God save our men.